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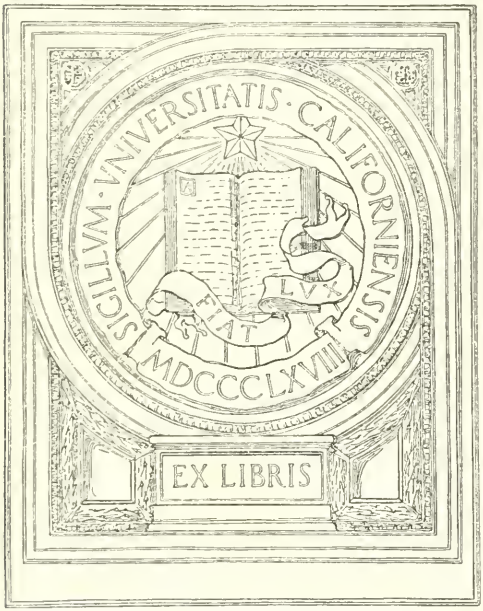

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# THE WORKS AND LIFE OF WALTER BAGEHOT

Vol. IX.

# THE WORKS AND LIFE

OF

# WALTER BAGEHOT

EDITED BY

MRS. RUSSELL BARRINGTON

THE WORKS IN NINE VOLUMES
THE LIFE IN ONE VOLUME
VOL. IX. OF THE WORKS

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# PREFACE TO VOLUME IX.

Walter Bagehot's connection with the *Economist* began in 1857. On 7th February of that year, the first of a series of letters by him signed "A Banker" appeared in its pages.

In the obituary notice of Walter Bagehot which appeared in *The Nation* (New York, 5th April, 1877) Mr. George Walker wrote :—

"The position of the *Economist* among newspapers is exceptional. Although attached to the views of the Liberal party in Great Britain, there is hardly another journal printed in our language which is so judicial in its character, and which has acquired such a hold on public confidence not in England only, but also on the Continent of Europe and in the United States. It is not merely a financial paper, though primarily devoted to the interests of commerce, banking and railways, but equally vindicates its claim to the title of a 'political, literary and general newspaper'.

"The birth of the *Economist* in 1843 was significant of the revolution which had taken place in English politics ; a chapter whose first pages were written by William Pitt, and its closing lines by Macaulay and Lord Brougham. Many years elapsed before the question of the suffrage—of personal participation by the subject in the Government of the country—became again prominent. In that interval the ascendancy of material interests in English politics, now the controlling



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influence in the Government of Great Britain, was definitely established. The *Economist* was the fruit and exponent of the new *régime*. Singularly enough, its establishment was partly due to the incapacity of the *Examiner* to realise and conform to the new aspect of public questions; or what is equally probable, to the reluctance of its editor to share the honours of his position with a new and ambitious aspirant. *Sed non omnes omnia possumus.* What Albany Fonblanque had so brilliantly accomplished in the field of political reform, it remained for another master-mind to achieve in the new field of commercial and financial subjects. The prophet of the new dispensation was James Wilson. He proposed to Mr. Fonblanque to contribute gratuitously to the *Examiner* papers on economical and financial subjects. His offer was refused, and he then established a journal which should be the special vehicle of his philosophy on these Sciences, and which he proposed to sustain mainly by his own exertions. In its early years the *Economist* was almost wholly the work of his own hands. He wrote not only the leaders, but a majority of the lesser articles; and what is of hardly inferior importance in journalism, he arranged and classified all its various information in such a manner that readers of every class knew just where to find the matter that concerned them and were sure to find it.

"In the seventeen years which intervened between the establishment of the *Economist* in 1843, and the relinquishment of its control by Mr. Wilson, on going to India as Finance Minister, at the end of 1859, there occurred a series of economical events not less momentous than those political ones which had made the reputation of the *Examiner*. The father of the modern commercial system of England was doubtless Mr. Huskisson. If Canning and Huskisson had not pre-

maturely died, the public affairs of Great Britain would probably have taken a different turn after 1827. Political and religious reforms might have been postponed, but commercial and financial reforms would certainly have been hastened. Even after Canning's death a good beginning was made by Mr. Huskisson, Sir Henry Parnell, and Mr. Poulett Thompson. The Finance Committee, from which great things were expected, was created in 1828, and in 1830 the question of taxation was discussed by these statesmen with a breadth and liberality hardly surpassed in later times. The very measures which were successfully carried by Sir Robert Peel fifteen years afterwards were brought forward by them at this time. They all agreed in recommending large remissions of taxation upon various raw materials of industry and articles of consumption and they were equally agreed in favouring the imposition of a property or income-tax. The further prosecution of these economical objects was, however, arrested by the all-absorbing question of Parliamentary reform, and after that question had been disposed of, by the emergence of Irish issues, which first divided, and ultimately destroyed the Reform Cabinet. The agitation of revenue reform, and especially the demand for relief from popular burdens, began about 1838, and for twenty years afterwards hardly any other domestic questions were considered than such as related to taxation, commerce, industry, or finance. The income-tax was imposed by Sir Robert Peel in 1842, in the face of great opposition from the Whigs, and solely for the purpose of balancing the Budget. He had at that time no disposition to reduce duties for the sake of revenue, but a partial readjustment and remission of certain duties adopted by him in the interests of Protection, produced results so advantageous to the Treasury,

that the great Tory statesman became an unwilling convert to the doctrine of Free Trade. Thus, under Tory auspices, by Huskisson first, and by Sir Robert Peel and his political legatee, Mr. Gladstone, afterwards, were the great commercial reforms which have made England the first of producing and trading nations conceived, promulgated and carried into operation. The Bank Act of 1844 was also the work of Sir Robert Peel, as had been the Act for resuming specie payments in 1819.

"Such were the influences under which the *Economist* was established, and such were the questions in the discussion of which its pre-eminence and influence were attained. Mr. Bagehot succeeded to this great inheritance in 1860, when by the removal of his father-in-law, Mr. Wilson, the control and management of the paper passed into his hands.

"In the *Economist* he occupied a judicial and not a partisan position, and no journalist in England has with equal conscientiousness and impartiality judged the domestic, foreign and international questions with which English journalism has had to deal. America owes him great respect and gratitude for his honest treatment of her civil war. . . . Since the war the *Economist* has, in America, entirely supplanted the *Times* as the representative of financial opinion in Europe; yet during all those years of heated railway speculation, when a word in its columns would have made the fortune of any enterprise seeking English capital, the integrity of its judgments was never questioned, and it has never even been suspected of improper influences. Nor has its place in American confidence been won by flattery of our country or its institutions. In all its discussions of our affairs there has been a manifest desire to get at the truth and to speak it fearlessly.

"While Mr. Bagehot probably lacked the creative and

organising power which enabled Mr. Wilson to establish the *Economist* and place it on so firm a footing, he has nevertheless greatly increased its reputation and authority. In 1843 there was neither precedent nor constituency for such a paper. Its precedent has been numerously followed—*sed longo intervallo*—both on the Continent of Europe and in the United States, and it has created a constituency of its own over which Mr. Bagehot has exercised a greater personal influence than was ever acquired by his predecessor. He has been a recognised authority in Europe on financial questions."

It was also written of Bagehot at the time of his death: "All the interests connected with banking and the money market, from the Directors of the Bank of England down to the smallest discount establishments, will miss the acute criticism, the steady guidance, the admirable lucid reasonings, which made the *Economist*, on its own ground, a power in the business world. And this power was strengthened by moral forces. The *Economist*, under Mr. Bagehot's management, never fell under the shadow of a suspicion. Its censures were often severe, and its warnings to the public could not fail sometimes to damage the repute of insecure investments. But the anger of the irritated investor, or of the disappointed speculator, never took the form of an impeachment of the motives of the critic. Even in Capel Court, where the belief in human virtue is scarcely developed, a suggestion that Mr. Bagehot's praise or blame was anything else than strictly impartial would have been scouted as an absurdity." And again: "Where shall we find articles on city matters that week after week command the attention and sustain the interest of educated men who have no personal concern in such subjects and no knowledge of them beyond that which Mr. Bagehot has himself imparted to them."

The articles treating of these financial questions have not, however, been those chosen for re-publication in the present volume. Information imparted and judgment delivered on these subjects in each issue of the *Economist* were doubtless of infinite value to those concerned in finance, and even of interest to those who were not, but it may be questioned whether these articles would have as much permanent interest for the public as those written on other subjects, namely on people, politics, and literature.

Moreover, the principles underlying the fluctuating phases of finance, have been exhaustively expounded in Bagehot's deliberate writings printed in the earlier volumes of this edition. Bagehot consistently applied general principles to all questions on which he gave judgment, on the characters and actions of men no less than when criticising political situations and books. Hence the permanent value of his criticisms on the great men and the great questions of his day. In an article of two or three columns in the *Economist* he would epitomise the whole life and character of a great statesman, or of a great political situation. In a speech Lord Granville delivered at University College in March, 1877, he paid the following tribute to the judicial character of Walter Bagehot's opinions: "Mr. Bagehot was a valued friend of mine, but I do not speak of him in that capacity. I consider his loss to be a great loss to politics, to economics, to literature, and to the community. . . . He resisted the temptation which all journalists must feel in writing on the topics of the day, to turn their thoughts to the currents of opinion on the subject, whether with a view of supporting or counteracting them, rather than to a full and abstract consideration of the subject itself. Mr. Bagehot always appeared to me, while consistently

applying the general principles he held, to consider the subject on its own merits, and the result was an almost judicial opinion on his part. I can say with truth that it has constantly happened to me that when unable, either from want of knowledge or from other circumstances, to come to a conclusion, I have resolved to postpone the consideration of the matter till I had seen what the next *Economist* said about it; and I have reason to know that more important persons than myself used constantly to consult him."

In another tribute paid him it was written: "He was a teacher of teachers. Among his disciples were not a few of the men who are the political leaders of the day. He was to politicians what Gortschakoff has long been to Russian diplomatists—an inspiring influence who made others able to do what they could not have done without him. Some of the most beneficial conceptions woven into recent legislation received their finish in Bagehot's busy brain. The public associate them with other and better known names, but most legislators generously ascribe them to the thinker that gave them life."

Perhaps the most interesting among the articles chosen are those on public men. Though possessed of an uncommon power of "intellectual detachment," Bagehot's mind was in no sense self-absorbed. On the contrary his sympathies were drawn out towards his fellow creatures by a singularly. unegotistic kind of interest. Probing the individual qualities in the minds and characters of prominent statesmen and writers was a study he found profoundly interesting, and he enjoyed unusual opportunities of pursuing this study, and giving it expression in a literary form. Often his articles read like the best kind of letters—frank, outspoken letters written to the public—never indiscreet, but singularly

fearless. He wrote of Matthew Arnold: "Mr. Arnold is bolder than a mere critic can be". Walter Bagehot was likewise bolder than a mere critic—he also saw with a poet's intuition, and, to quote words from his essay on Hartley Coleridge, "the poet, being himself, speaks like one who has authority; he knows and must not deceive".

The European reputation Bagehot enjoyed as director of the *Economist* vouches for the appreciation which such unbiassed candour inspired, and as these utterances have, since his death, been entombed in old numbers of the *Economist* which but comparatively few possess, it is obviously right to rescue from oblivion a certain number by including them in this complete edition of Bagehot's works.

E. I. B.

Herd's Hill.

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ERRATA.

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## MR. DISRAELI.

(*From "The Economist," 2nd July*, 1859.)

"THE career of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer," said one of Mr. Disraeli's political friends soon after his comparative failure as a Minister in 1852, "is not closed; we believe its brightest portion is in the future. We have invariably observed that whenever Mr. Disraeli has received a check, it has only been the herald of a great advance; and that when the world has believed him beaten, he has always been on the eve of his greatest victories." Read by the light of recent events, this was undoubtedly a remarkable prophecy. Mr. Disraeli has never held a position so eminent as that which he now holds. He was the life and soul of the late Administration. Without him it could not have lasted a single week. He has resigned without accepting any reward. Lord Derby has taken the blue ribbon. Lord Malmesbury and Sir John Pakington have had the Order of the Bath. Mr. Disraeli, who was far more essential to the Government than either of them, whose management of the House of Commons won him on this occasion universal admiration, whose recent speeches have scarcely been rivalled for insight, point, and individual character, by any statesman of our day,—has retired with a dignity that will deservedly increase his influence in entering on the leadership of the powerful Conservative Opposition. It is not, therefore, an inappropriate time to make a few remarks on his general capacity and character as a statesman. He has proved, in the last year, that his great abilities are matured, and his character weighted, by experience. He has shown that he can do, what in 1852 at least he had not yet learned to do,—lead with dignity, and fail with dignity after

personal exertions which, so far as their intellectual character is concerned, might well have earned ample success. What are the principal characteristics of his strange and brilliant career?

Mr. Disraeli is chiefly remarkable for the unusual combination which his mind presents of individual tenacity of purpose, with a flexibility and pliancy of intellect rarely found in men of so much audacity and strength. There never was a statesman of eminence who, when he entered on public life, was so strangely in need of the lessons of experience; there never was one who was so apt a learner; there never was one who was more resolute to turn that ready faculty to the best account. From the day of his maiden speech, now more than twenty-one years ago, when he appealed in vain to the House of Commons for a cheer, and sat down with the warning, "I am not at all surprised at the reception I have experienced. I have begun several times several things, and I have often succeeded at last. I will sit down now, but the time will come when you will listen to me," up to the day when, amid the breathless attention of the House, he delivered his gallant, eloquent, and adroit defence of the late Government, Mr. Disraeli has never quailed beneath the difficulties of his arduous career, and never failed in that self-possession, which knows how to turn every error, every false step into the materials of a future success. Beginning without rank, without connection, without wealth,—with every difficulty in his path which the prejudices of race could conjure up,—without entering into the convictions or understanding the political traditions either of the party he was to defend or of the party he was to assail,—wholly destitute of the kind of practical sagacity which most easily inspires Englishmen with confidence,—with an ill-regulated literary ambition and a false melodramatic taste that were well calculated to increase tenfold the existing prejudices against him, it is difficult to conceive a greater marvel than the brilliant success which Mr. Disraeli has achieved, single-handed, in a sphere of life usually thought singularly exclusive and inaccessible to unassisted adventurers.

The success of this great party-leader is, we believe, trace-

able to two principal gifts—a very sensitive and impressible, but extremely unoriginal imagination, and a dexterity seldom equalled in working up all the impressions he receives into materials for personal attacks. Had Mr. Disraeli been a man of deeper and more original imagination than he is, he could not have surrendered as he has done, at every crisis in his career, to the ascendant influence of the hour. He has never had a political faith,—he probably does not know what it means. No man has invented so many political theories. No living politician's fancy has been half so prolific of suggestions for new bases of political creed. No statesman has ever been so "viewy". But notwithstanding all his strictures on Sir Robert Peel for want of originality and imagination, there probably never was a statesman so unoriginal as himself. His efforts at originality—whether political or literary—have ever been of that excessively theatrical kind which seem, as it were, to be always gasping for breath; and he is never successful except when he desists from such efforts, and simply adopts or delineates what he sees in the actual life around him. Whether as a novelist or as a statesman, his efforts at original construction have always been rhapsodical. Those who knew his early fictions and *Coningsby* well, recognised last session, in India Bill No. 2, unmistakeable traces of the same mind. The same unsound imagination which filled Mr. Disraeli's novels with the most flimsy and eccentric theories of history, society, and political organisation,—which invented the "Venetian-Doge" theory of the English Constitution,—the doctrine of the absolute ascendancy of the "Caucasian" race,—the gospel of "Young England,"—the historical hypothesis that Charles the First was a martyr to the principle of direct taxation,—the identity of Tory principles with those of Free Trade,—the theory that the "tendency of civilisation is to pure monarchy,"—that "an educated nation recoils from the imperfect vicariat of what it calls a representative Government," and a thousand others,—has been equally visible whenever Mr. Disraeli has attempted to win the admiration of the House of Commons by any proposition of a directly constructive nature. No politician has ever shown, in the bad sense of the word, so

*romantic* a political imagination,—in other words, a fancy so little imbued with the laws of real life, so ready to revolt against those laws, and put feeble idealities in their place. His ideal measures, like his ideal heroes, have always seemed the inventions of a mind on the rack to produce something grand or startling instead of something true and life-like; there is no trace in them of the genius which breathes in his criticisms of actual measures, and his delineations of actual men. Nothing has really impeded his progress more than his efforts after originality. His mind was made to receive impressions and to interpret the tendencies of others. When he has limited himself to this he has been marvellously successful. When he has striven to engrave something new upon his age, he has fallen far below the standard of even average English sense.

On the other hand, if there have been no statesmen of eminence so devoid of constructive genius as Mr. Disraeli—if, even, he has fallen far below his great adversary Sir Robert Peel in his attempts to create, simply because he has been possessed with the desire to astonish, instead of with the desire to interpret, his age,—there has seldom been a statesman with so great a power for understanding and delineating all that comes within the actual range of his experience, and turning it into a weapon of the most formidable efficiency. Mr. Disraeli has made himself a *power* in the House of Commons exactly by this art. Whenever he has lost way, it has been by attempts at original statesmanship; but, when he has confined his efforts to showing how well he understands both the weak and strong points of those around him, he has been terrible and quite unsurpassed. Whether in fiction or in debate, there are few who have drawn so many true and subtle sketches of those whom they have actually seen and known. His power seems limited to direct experience. He has no insight into past history,—no power of giving or restoring life to characters with which he has not come into personal contact. But he is an absolute master of personalities of all kinds, whether purely critical, flattering, or caustic; and it is by the unsparing use of this formidable literary weapon

that, in spite of all blunders, he has won his way to the eminence on which he now stands. He has said, in one of his works, "nothing is great but the personal," and for him, at least, it has been so. He has adopted the opinions of parties as he would adopt a national costume. "Tory," "Radical," "Tory-Radical," "Free-Trader," "Protectionist," "Conservative," "Reformer," no creed has come amiss to him, and amidst them all he has maintained the same clear eye for the personal qualities of those around him, and the same determined will to use them for individual or party ends.

In short, Mr. Disraeli owes his great success to his very unusual capacity for *applying* a literary genius, in itself limited, to the practical purposes of public life. Had his genius been really deeper than it is, it would have absorbed him, and he would have devoted his life to the exercise of an imagination which, as it is, he has principally valued as a formidable political weapon. While his combative instinct has been strong, and so determined him to seek a fair field for its practical satisfaction, his literary insight has been only of that depth which irritates and fires the intellect without absorbing it. It has not been deep enough to engross his powers; it has been quite deep enough to give him the sense of power. He forms, in this respect, a remarkable contrast to Sir E. B. Lytton, who, with probably greater literary genius, has nothing like the same power of wielding it as a practical instrument,—the same art of turning his literary ploughshares and pruning hooks into swords and spears. Indeed, practical politics is not an attractive field for men who care to delineate life more than they care to influence it. Statesmen must usually be occupied more with measures, social tendencies, public wants, national convictions, than with the niceties of individual character. Mr. Disraeli is just enough of a literary man to indicate clearly in all his speeches that these things do not seriously occupy him,—that he compels himself to use them as instruments for ends which interest him far more deeply. When we read his speeches we feel, by a kind of instinct, that there is nothing very real or very deep,—nothing which seems to him of essential importance,—as long as he stays in

the field of dry argument and exposition. But when we come to the personal phases of the question, all is changed and living. The telling epithets, the graphic hints, the signs of living insight, are all reserved for those passages in which he addresses himself not to measures but to men, in which he throws off a happy picture of a statesman's career, or delineates with life-like touches the demeanour of the House of Commons. He has nothing of the statesman's power of imaging forth the actual effect and operation of the measures he advocates,—nothing of the statesman's power of penetrating to the heart of a deep national conviction. When he attempts these things, he is apt to produce some romantic failure that brings scorn upon himself; but, though almost all his power is limited to the use of a keen and delicate weapon very susceptible of abuse, he has at least recently shown that the responsibility of a high position can make him generous and dignified,—with here and there even a certain touch of chivalry,—in the wielding of a talent so individual and so pungent as his own.

## LORD MACAULAY.

(*From "The Economist," 31st December*, 1859.)

WE little thought when two years ago we congratulated the country on the elevation of our greatest historian to the peerage, that we should have to record and lament his death before his voice had once, as far as we know, been heard in the House of Lords. Lord Macaulay died on Wednesday evening at eight o'clock, at his residence at Kensington, of a disease of the heart, from which he suffered long and severely in 1852. Taken ill a fortnight ago, it was hoped that he was recovering, when a relapse suddenly carried him off at the age of fifty-nine.

There are few living men who are likely to contribute so much to the enduring portion of English literature as the historian whom we have lost. Conspicuous as were his political claims to a peerage,—claims by no means founded on any purely literary services,—it is chiefly as an historian and an essayist that he will be remembered amongst us. As a politician, no doubt he exercised now and then a very remarkable influence. Some of his speeches in the House of Commons are said to have changed the fate of a measure, by entirely changing the result of a division. And we can well imagine that this was so. Lucid exposition was his forte. If a practical principle had to be so explained that it should be convincing to all who grasped it, and so stated that no intellect, however passive, could avoid being penetrated by its logic, and delighted with the various illustrations of its applicability, Lord Macaulay could always have succeeded better than any other living man in so explaining it. He somewhere finds fault with Mr. Hallam for indicating, rather than telling facts by allusion. It is the worst of habits for a popular

speaker, and one into which Lord Macaulay was in no danger of falling. He delighted in *exhaustive* exposition of every kind, whether in narrating or discussing,—and this it was which, while it eminently fitted him to carry the House of Commons on all occasions when that method was applicable, rather unfitted him for wielding the ordinary powers of a statesman. There are not many occasions in political life when *full-length* portraiture, either of principles or facts, is wanted, or is likely to be successful. Lord Macaulay's successes are all of this class. He was a politician for great occasions,—when the *magnifying* character both of his intellect and his imagination could be brought into play with effect,—when he might safely be permitted to draw the attention of his hearers to a first principle, bid it expand before their eyes in every direction, and fill all their minds with homely and vivid illustrations of its worth. This kind of power is sometimes very useful, especially when a simple political principle which has grown tiresome and commonplace is to be defended. There are scarcely any of Lord Macaulay's most splendid and effective speeches which do not owe their effective character to some form of this power. When religious Toleration had become so hackneyed a word that it rather annoyed men of liberal minds even to be obliged to defend it, Lord Macaulay delighted in expounding its merits and recalling its full meaning till it had as new and curious an interest to the minds of his readers or his audience, as the commonest texture acquires when you see it beneath the glass of a microscope. He could write in favour of the civil privileges of the Jews with power and force when to every other mind the question was worked utterly dry. His speech on the Dissenters' Chapels Bill was one of the most effective of his orations. In short, his greatest triumphs were gained by bringing to bear on hackneyed, though only half-known, principles of popular right, the influence of his vivid and powerful imagination.

But the very qualities which made Lord Macaulay a great orator for great occasions, and a great painter of great events, unfitted him for the quick play of ordinary life. His mind

was comprehensive enough, but just because it was exhaustive, it was also necessarily slow. It dilated every point upon which it dwelt, brought it into connection with innumerable other points, and hence was not fitted for rapid movement over an extended line of argument or a wide field of survey. He dealt most successfully with cases where he could choose his own point of view and elaborate it,—not where he was forced to change with the rapidly changing scene. Had he been able, for instance, to speak on the recent alteration in the Government of India, we may be sure that his argument would have been as striking and instructive as it was when that alteration was last considered and deferred. But he was not the man to have dealt successfully as a politician with the rapidly changing aspects of foreign politics during the last two years. He was admirable in his treatment of a well-understood crisis, involving old, clear, and well-discussed principles, on which conflict ran high. But he had not that quick and ready appreciation of transient symptoms,—that half-instinctive, half-empirical tact, which is needed in the constitution of a party leader or a great statesman. A sound judgment on a case where the data are clear, is a needful but very insufficient requisite for a great politician. He must have ready feeling, quick apprehension, fine political sympathies, warning instincts, courageous instincts in the very moment of action,—and here Lord Macaulay was probably deficient.

Probably also, like others of the great Whig statesmen of his generation, he may have been deficient in appreciation of the finer moral shades of political sentiment. As a professed adherent of Expediency in its widest sense, he could scarcely be otherwise. And the admiration for compromise which pervades all his writings,—and something like a want of interest in lofty motives and unbending principles,—point to the same deficiency, and indicate the one element which renders his brilliant estimates of men of action often unsatisfactory and untrue. But this is not the time to dwell on the alloys which were mingled with the great qualities which we have lost. As a practical politician he proved to be proud and courageous when his convictions were unpopular. If he

estimated prudence and a genius for compromise highly in others, it was not because he had much of it in himself. But even if the limitations to his marvellous power are well defined, —if his skill does not reach to the delineation of the deeper parts of character,—England can scarcely hope for another historian who can paint pictures so true and expressive of her greatest men and greatest scenes. What he has said of Burke is eminently true of himself. "Others have, perhaps, been equally industrious, and have collected an equal mass of materials. But the manner in which *he* brought his higher powers of intellect to work on statements of facts and on tables of figures was peculiar to himself. In every part of these huge bales of information which repelled almost all other readers, his mind found something to instruct or delight. His reason analysed and digested those vast and shapeless masses; his imagination connected and coloured them. Out of darkness and dullness and confusion he formed a multitude of ingenious and vivid pictures. He had in the highest degree that noble faculty whereby man is enabled to live in the past and in the future, in the distant and the unreal."

## THE DEATH OF COUNT CAVOUR.

(*From "The Economist," 8th June*, 1861.)

THE foremost statesman in Europe,—the man whose life was of the highest political value to the world, and second only in *importance* to that of the Emperor of the French,—is no more. The death of Count Cavour is felt to be an event of the same unspeakable moment, though, as it seems to Englishmen, of exactly opposite tendency, with that which so suddenly snatched away the late Czar in the middle of the Crimean war. The death of Nicholas was the death-blow of the aggressive policy in Russia; and the enemies of Italy will no doubt dare to hope that the removal of the great leader of Italian regeneration will prove a catastrophe as fatal to the hopes which he inspired, and the far-sighted policy by which he advanced with sure and equal step to their realisation. But the parallel is utterly delusive. Count Cavour was the leader of an advancing age, and did but represent a moral force which secured for his country the sympathy of all advancing nations, and the fear or respect of even the most retrograde. The power by which he worked was not his own, and does not die with him. Nicholas, on the other hand, represented a policy which belonged to the past rather than to the present; with strong unflinching determination he strove to stem the tide of European opinion, and he rallied for this purpose the forlorn hope of Russian barbarism. For his death, therefore, there was no remedy;—the power by which he had worked was dwindling fast even beneath his hands, and faded rapidly away when he was struck down. He restored and represented a dying tradition; Count Cavour created and represented a new spring of national pride and hope which will constitute the tradition of unborn generations.

The events of his short but crowded political career, which extended only over eleven years,—and the most important part of it during which he was Prime Minister only over nine,—have been too often recapitulated within the last two days to need formal narration here. Those years of his life in which the political character is chiefly formed were passed in England : he did not return to Piedmont until he was thirty-two years old ; and hence it has been the greatest pride of English statesmen to point to Count Cavour's wonderful success as in some sense a graft taken from a British stock. Nor is it mere national egotism to believe this. It was his clear-sighted financial creed, and a great financial speech in 1850, which first introduced him to power ; and he had learned his political economy from Adam Smith. It was a speech on ecclesiastical jurisdiction, expressing his deep conviction that all Churches should be zealously restrained from interference with secular affairs, which first gained him extensive popularity in Italy ; and such a Church he had seen in England and England alone. It was his steady belief in a Constitution worked by the natural aristocracy of a country, but yet in close connection with the popular mind, which gave him an instrument at once sufficiently powerful and sufficiently under control to carry out his great designs ; and such a Constitution he had seen only in England.

Yet, though England may have supplied him with political principles suited to his needs, it certainly could not have given him the consummate power with which he used them. Probably no English statesmen that ever lived would have exhibited, under such circumstances, so striking a combination of audacity and tact,—of courage to incur a great risk, and sagacity in measuring what risk would be too great,—of equal power to strike, and to hold back his own supporters from striking, according to the circumstances, as Count Cavour. No statesman known to history has ever counted the cost of such great dangers with so cool and strong a mind. He was as strong in defeat as in success. It was nearly the first act of his political career, after the great disaster of Novara, to urge the duty of cordially strengthening Charles Albert's

Government instead of indulging in useless recriminations. And his first great venture as a Minister was so contrived as to be a cordial to the Italian spirit,—a stimulant to the exhausted hopes of a long oppressed nation. The master-stroke of forcing Sardinia into a favourable comparison with Austria by sending an army to the Crimea, while Austria remained sullen and passive in the Principalities, gained him even far more power at home than abroad, because it raised the hopes and animated the national pride of Italy. Nor was it Count Cavour's fault if he was subsequently obliged to wound that national spirit in the equivalent rendered for the aid of France. Had England been willing in 1856 to unite with France and Sardinia in resolutely curbing the influence of Austria in Italy, the same great result might possibly have been obtained without the same humiliating price. It is well known that Count Cavour applied, and applied in vain, to England for a counterweight to the influence of France,—and that the great debt of exclusive obligation afterwards incurred, was incurred in consequence of our refusal to interfere.

But neither in sending a Sardinian contingent to the Crimea, nor in the negotiation of the French alliance, did Count Cavour display so happy a combination of sagacity and daring, as in the occupation of the Umbrian Marches last year, and the summons to the Pope to dismiss his foreign auxiliaries. Had Garibaldi been permitted to push on into the Roman territory, the revolution would have passed beyond the control of Sardinia, and an anarchy risked which would have brought down either an Austrian or an extended French intervention. Had Sardinia prohibited Garibaldi's movement upon the Roman territory, as she did the further movement upon Venetia, the unpopularity incurred would have probably overthrown the Sardinian Ministry and seriously risked the Sardinian leadership. The reasons for the movement were urgent and weighty, but the danger confronted was enormous. The Pope was driven to extremities,—Austria had a new and almost unanswerable excuse for marching to his aid, since the moral logic of the step would certainly have justified quite as well the invasion of Venetia,—and the Ultramontane party in

France was irritated into an opposition so vindictive, that it was far from certain whether the Emperor might not be obliged to withdraw his countenance. It cannot be doubted that in discriminating the true moment to defy the Pope and take the formal guidance of the Neapolitan revolution, Count Cavour gave proof of the rarest and highest statesmanlike genius. He had before him a problem in which all the alternatives seemed equally menacing. He instinctively chose for his country the solution which involved danger indeed, but no humiliation,—not the loss of that leadership which had been, during so many months of Garibaldi's enterprise, in partial abeyance; and the resolve raised him to a place in the nation's affections of which he can now never be deprived.

That such a statesman should be cut off while Rome is still in the hands of France, and Venetia still in the hands of Austria, is more than tragic,—for in tragedy the intertwining threads are all cut together,—but here the country's need continues, though the man who could best satisfy it is gone. In no one else can the same powers be found united;—the capacity for ruling rightly, and the capacity for convincing a free people that they are ruled rightly;—the power to win the confidence of an Italian Parliament as no one else could win it, and the power to use the authority so gained as no one else could use it. No English statesman except Pitt has ever gained a power so nearly equivalent to a dictatorship as Count Cavour has exercised for the past nine years over the growing State of Sardinia. Nor is such a combination of practical sagacity and intellectual sagacity,—of the passion that sways, the reasoning that guides, the strength that retains, and the humour that fascinates men,—often seen combined in the same person. Ricasoli, Minghetti, Ratazzi, all seem dwarfed beside the great intellect and will which have so recently been put forth in all their power, not only to grasp new conquests, but to restrain his countrymen from snatching at the inaccessible. But that firm faith in the destinies of his country expressed in his last hour by the dying statesman has been sown by him in so many Italian hearts that it will be impossible for them to despond. It was the last crowning

triumph of his life to reconcile all the great men who had assisted him in the glorious work. And now, though in the bitterness of their loss, when they look at Rome and Venetia, many may feel inclined to echo the melancholy old words of patriotic despondency, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved,"—they will not allow themselves to doubt that the same Power which raised up Count Cavour for his work, and engraved its purposes on the marvellous triumphs of his short administration, will find instruments noble enough to complete what he has so nobly begun.

## THE LIMIT OF DEFENSIVE OUTLAY: MR. COBDEN'S THREE PANICS.

(*From "The Economist," 26th April*, 1862.)

MR. COBDEN has during the last ten days contributed much to our instruction and something to our intellectual entertainment. He has written a very remarkable letter on the laws of warfare on which we have much to say, though we are reluctantly compelled to postpone it now, and he has even more recently published a pamphlet entitled the "Three Panics, an historical episode," which is a shrewd and sharp commentary upon the military, and especially upon the naval, outlay of the last few years. It is little to say that this essay is well worth notice: Mr. Cobden's writings must always be so. He never writes save on a subject on which he has abundant knowledge and peculiar views; he has too the first literary merit—a style which drives thoughts *home*. Whatever he writes must always be read with pleasure, and will very seldom be read by any one without instruction. But this pamphlet deals with *the* question of the time. Can any competent and fair-minded person say, in the face of the vast increase in our naval expenditure—in the face of the new inventions which are daily augmenting in number—which increase faster and faster every year, that he does not want some guiding principle—some distinct rule which shall determine precisely when this vast outlay is injurious and wasteful, and when, on the other hand, it is beneficial and wise? On one point we are all agreed. We all hate to spend this money; we all hate aggression; we all hate taxation. We only pay our present taxes because it is said that the present expenditure is essential to our defence.

Mr. Cobden, as we know, believes that this notion is a

pure delusion, and he accumulates a great deal of history to justify his opinion. He says that there was one panic in 1846, when Prince de Joinville wrote his pamphlet and when the Duke of Wellington's letter was first published; there was another in 1852, at the beginning of the Empire. The military panic of 1846, he tells us, was extinguished by the commercial panic of 1847 and by the revolution of 1848; the panic of 1852 was extinguished by the Russian war, in which we were allied to the French Emperor, of whom we were in such painful dread. The panic of 1861, he suggests, will conclude with the following passage of Sir G. C. Lewis's speech on the 17th February, 1862:—

"There was one article required for Canada that was not used by any of our regiments, and which was not in store in this country—the article of long boots. The French Government having been informed of our difficulty, undertook the supply of 1,500 pairs of boots, which came over in forty-eight hours from Paris, and at a cost for which they could have scarcely been obtained from our contractors. I am happy to mention this as a proof of the friendly action of the French Government (hear, hear)." "And thus," says Mr. Cobden, "ends the third panic."

Mr. Cobden shows at great length, and with much ability, that the accounts given in 1846, in 1852, and in 1861, of the proceedings in the French dockyards, were certainly inconsistent with one another, and were often as certainly erroneous. He shows that the modes of comparison adopted by various speakers were radically at variance with one another, were often unsound, and were often adapted rather to the immediate argumentative wants of the speaker than to any higher purpose. He is especially watchful of certain "block-ships," which seem to appear whenever the Admiralty is attacked for not having ships enough, and which seem to disappear whenever it asks Parliament to vote money for more ships. He shows that a startling passage in Lord Lyndhurst's celebrated oration had little, if any, foundation. He accumulates instances in which the French naval force has not only been exaggerated, but grossly exaggerated.

But these are easy victories on the outworks of a great and complicated topic. What is the true test by which we shall determine whether our outlay is wise or unwise? *That* is the heart of the question. If we decide that, we shall not need reference to old speeches in Parliament; if we do not decide that, all *Hansard* will be irrelevant—may probably mislead into dangerous error.

What, then, is this test? It certainly is not the absolute magnitude of the French navy. Mr. Cobden not merely admitted, but maintained and expounded this in Parliament, in a speech to which he refers in this Pamphlet: "France has a large extent of coast which entitles her to maintain a large navy, but it does not follow that France desires to have as large a navy as you. I say that France ought not to have as large a navy as England. Nay, I go further, and say that if I saw a disposition on the part of France to have as large a navy as England, and especially if I saw a disposition not to yield to the offer of an explanation, I should suspect France of having a sinister purpose in those armaments, and, if it came to a question of rivalry after that offer of explanation had been made, I would as cheerfully vote £100,000,000 sterling as I would vote £5,000,000 under the present system; and for this reason—and it is a reason to which I am sure the French would yield if it were properly put to them—that England has no frontier but the sea, and has, unfortunately, forty or fifty colonies which have no defence except her navy. England has five times the mercantile navy of France, and this gives her the right to have a larger navy than France; while France, as a military power, requires to have a large army to guard her frontier against the other great military powers."

We must have a defensive force equal to the attacking force. It is obvious that, as our fleet *must* be distributed, and theirs *may* be concentrated, ours should be much larger than theirs—must be much larger if it is to be effectual for the purpose. Equality in figures is inferiority in reality. France, too, may not be alone. A coalition between her and any other great naval power may not be likely, but it is possible; it is within those fair limits of reasonable probability which

should regulate our measures of precaution. The Stock Exchange was excited not very long since, to its inmost capitalists, by a rumour that there was a general combination between France and Russia. Many persons were ruined by that error; and though we should not take extreme precaution, we should take *some* precaution against a contingency of which the very anticipation is so dangerous and so fatal.

But if the absolute amount of the French navy is not the true criterion for limiting ours, what is that criterion? The amount up to which we should reasonably insure is in this case, as in all other cases, the limit of possible danger. The *worst event* which we can fairly anticipate is the event against which, as reasonable men, we should provide. We ought to have a producible fleet to defend our shores, not only equal, but decidedly superior to every producible fleet which can be brought against us. We say *producible*, to get rid of the technical expressions "in commission," "afloat," etc. We must have at hand workable, effectual ships, better than the very best which we can reasonably expect to be accumulated against us. That our force should be equal will not be enough; it must be superior. Failure to an enemy is an ordinary defeat, is a momentary check in a very arduous enterprise. But failure in a Channel engagement to us would be an irreparable calamity. The landing of a hostile army on our shores, while our fleet is vanquished and disabled, would be an approximation to ruin which we ought never to risk,—which we must assuredly ward off.

But if this is the true criterion, how is it to be applied? We boldly say that we should annually have an official estimate of the *maximum probable force which can be brought against us, and a comparative view of the means of meeting it.* We require, if we are to maintain our present outlay, or any similar outlay, a military Budget; we require the best estimate that can be made of the ways and means of possible enemies on the one hand, and of our own ways and means on the other. Of course all such estimates must be very rough: the best of them must contain many imperfections of detail; but it is not too much to ask, now that our military estimates

for next year are £16,000,000, and our naval estimates are £11,800,000, that we should have yearly, not loose talk as now, but a *bonâ-fide* business-like official statement of what it is apprehended may be brought against us, and of what we have in readiness to meet it. Official men speak under a sense of peculiar responsibility, and they will never feel its beneficial effects more than when they speak upon the defence of their country, and upon the probable resources of its possible enemies.

We shall have it objected that such an official estimate as we have now proposed would anger foreign nations. And if nothing had ever been said in the English Parliament as to foreign armaments, the objection might have conclusive weight and force. But every one knows that such statements *have* been made in Parliament. Every one knows that vague assertions about the French navy—the navy of the most susceptible foreign nation—have been made by speakers of weight and name. Mr. Cobden has collected several by the Prime Minister himself. And if such statements are hazarded, they should be exact and useful statements. We are now running the risk of offending foreign nations, and are not obtaining the desired advantage of instructing our own. If we incur the danger, let us gain the prize. Let us give such full, clear, and systematic statements as will be a fair assurance to the country that we have approximately estimated the danger to be encountered, and the resources with which we are to encounter it.

We shall be told that we cannot obtain this information, and it is possible that sometimes there may be a little difficulty. But we share with Mr. Cobden a suspicion of unknown dangers. If a risk is imperceptible, perhaps it is unreal. If there are any very terrible armaments in Europe, those who will pay well for information respecting them will easily get the best information. Empires are not ruined in a corner. The only fleet of which we need be afraid will be a tolerably conspicuous fleet, of which we can nearly enough count the number, and nearly enough also compute the power.

We are confident that *if* this information were sedulously

obtained and frankly communicated,—*if* the discussion in the English Parliament were periodical, full, and accurate,—the certain effect in foreign countries would be important and would be pacific. *Now*, when startling announcements are shrouded in an atmosphere of mystery, the result is doubtless prejudicial. These exceptional confidences are fearful to us, and naturally excite the enmity of others. But if the English nation were yearly called into council on its concerns,—if it yearly heard what were its military liabilities and what were its military assets,—if, as a set official matter, the military resources of foreign nations were annually expounded to us,—no odium would be excited or umbrage would presumably be taken on any particular occasion. We should not be computing our aggressive strength, but computing our defensive strength. And what is of yet greater importance, foreign nations would understand clearly what now they scarcely understand at all, that our armaments are really and exclusively regulated by theirs—that if they diminish we shall diminish, and if they do not augment we shall never augment. Mr. Cobden proposes some kind of arrangement or negotiation with his friend the French Emperor. But, as men of business, we shrink from "understandings" with our competitors. Unless they are very full, very accurate, and very comprehensive, they are sure to lead to *mis*-understandings. Definite treaties are good, and general confidence is excellent, but vague, shadowy, and impalpable conventions will only exacerbate the ill-feeling which they are designed to allay. A regular discussion in Parliament would obtain the expected advantage, and would not involve the possible danger. The French Emperor and every other Sovereign would then well know our motives. If he was *bonâ-fide* desirous of a sincere peace, he would reduce his armaments ; and only if he were not so desirous would he not reduce them.

At present we are voting these vast sums upon grounds which are inconclusive and irrelevant ; Mr. Cobden is objecting to them for reasons which are equally so. He tells us to disarm, but does not prove that there is no danger ; we con-

tinue arming, but we do not ascertain that there *is* danger. Neither course is wise nor rational. Mr. Cobden says the military services are always desirous of expenditure, but there is an electioneering anecdote of the last century which they might quote against him. A certain stupid baronet objected to Mr. Fox that he was always opposed to Mr. Pitt, whether Mr. Pitt were right or wrong. Horne Tooke judiciously remarked that upon that showing it was an equal objection to the baronet that he always *supported* Mr. Pitt whether right or wrong. Mr. Cobden always objects to armaments ; soldiers, he says, always advocate them. Unless we have a business-like estimate of the danger, who can say which of them is wise and which is unwise ?

## MR. STANSFELD AND SIGNOR MAZZINI.

(*From "The Economist," 26th March*, 1864.)

It is impossible to deny that the Junior Lord of the Admiralty has come out of the recent personal attacks upon him, *apropos* of the Greco affair, somewhat damaged by the encounter. It is equally clear to us that this result is substantially an unjust one, and that the damage incurred is due solely to the want of tact and skill by which his, Mr. Stansfeld's, defence was so signally marked. We believe he had a perfectly good case, had he known how to put it forth with fitting boldness and candour. Throughout the whole debate only Mr. Bright and Mr. Forster said the right thing or took the right tone; and in one point even Mr. Forster's spirited defence of his friend was weak, and we think mischievous. Originally the facts of the case were very simple; the allegation was very narrow; and the culpability involved in all that any one really believed or entertained for a moment, absolutely *nil*.

The charge was brought, or rather the insinuation made, in the accusing speech of the Public Prosecutor in France, whose pleasure and duty it is, notoriously, to make matters look as bad as possible against the prisoner and his friends. One of the Prosecutor's chief aims was to connect Mazzini with Greco's plot. In this attempt, as we all know, he signally failed. Greco's intercourse with Mazzini was of a date much earlier than this affair; the supposed complicity of Mazzini rested on the sole assertion of Greco, and is denied positively by Mazzini, and we presume no one will believe Greco in such a matter in preference to Mazzini. The only scrap of *evidence* consists of two fragments of letters *asserted* by the Procureur-Imperial, but not proved, to be in Mazzini's handwriting, and with no date affixed. The sole connection

of Mr. Stansfeld with the matter was the inference of the Procureur, a perfectly legitimate one under the circumstances, that the writer of these fragments discovered on Greco's person, *whoever he might be*, desired him to address letters, *at some time or other*, to the house in which Mr. Stansfeld lives. (The other statement of the Procureur, that Mr. Stansfeld had been in 1857 the banker of the Tibaldi conspiracy fund, was made on no authority, sustained by not a tittle of evidence, and fell to the ground at once as a mere loose slander, for which no one believes there was ever the slightest shadow of foundation.)

Unhappily, Mr. Stansfeld did not confine himself to a simple and indignant denial of the remotest knowledge of either the Greco plot or the Tibaldi fund, and to a frank acknowledgment that he had allowed Mazzini to receive letters at his house under cover to him or under feigned names,—and *a bold justification and explanation* of the reason why he had done so. Instead of this, Mr. Stansfeld not only launched out into praise of Mazzini's character—which as an attached friend of many years he was right and generous in doing,—but proceeded to expound Mazzini's views, and to declare that Mazzini shared his own detestation of the doctrine that political assassination was ever a warrantable act—which he need not have done, and which he could not do with safety or without rashness.

Mr. Stansfeld is guilty, has been found guilty, has admitted that he is guilty, of two—and only of two—things : *first*, of loving and admiring Mazzini personally, and *secondly*, of protecting Mazzini's correspondence by allowing it to be addressed to his house. *In neither of these things* is there anything to be ashamed of, any guilt, or anything needing apology or deprecatory exculpation. (When Mr. Stansfeld took office indeed, the matter was somewhat changed, and official proprieties then would suggest that he should have requested Mazzini to obtain the needed security through some other friends. This he appears to have done, though we are not exactly informed *when*.) There is nothing to be ashamed of in being Mazzini's friend. He is, in our opinion, a very wrong-headed, perverse, mis-

chievous man; a man with whose views of Italian liberty and the means by which it can be best promoted we entirely disagree; a man who, by his extreme republican notions and his extravagant and absurd ideas of the efficacy of mere popular and insurrectionary enthusiasm as against or instead of regular armies and constitutional organisation, has (we believe) done more harm to his country than his influence in keeping up the fanatic longing for unity and independence upon the people has done good. We consider that he has often been a dreadful mar-plot, that his misguided fanaticism has sacrificed many valuable lives, that he values unity far too much and civil liberty far too little. If we had been Cavour, and Mazzini had urged the Republican party to oppose and counter-work the constitutional struggles in 1859 and 1860 (as at one time there was reason to fear he would do), we should have hanged him without scruple, though with regret, as a dangerous enemy (though not an intentional one) to his country's cause. But with all this, we should be no more ashamed of Mazzini's personal friendship, than of that of Kossuth, or Mr. Bright, or Daniel O'Connell, or Garibaldi, or Louis Blanc,—or any other patriot, whom we hold to be in the main earnest and sincere, though in our opinion, and to our ceaseless indignation and condemnation, perverse, misguided, and very mischievous. Mr. Gladstone hit the exact truth when he had the courage to say that, however mistaken and injudicious and *exalté* we might deem Mazzini to be, every one who knows him will agree that he has all the virtues as well as all the faults of an enthusiast, and that both his patriotism and his general tone of character have something about them of singular purity, devotion, and disinterestedness. A man's political views may be utterly wrong-headed, and yet he may be a fascinating and a noble character.

Whether Mazzini would maintain that political assassination is ever justifiable, we do not know. We should be sorry to vouch for him on this head,—or to shriek at him as a detestable villain if he does hold that doctrine. *We* do not hold it. We, in common with nearly all English thinkers, and with the better portion of continental ones, have at last

found out that such acts of violence are nearly always impure in motive, that they are intellectually irrational, that politically they are blunders, that they are with the rarest exceptions indisputable crimes, and that it is for the good of the world that they should be held up to signal condemnation. But when we reflect that in this country nearly every boy who goes to a public school and nearly every young man who goes to the University, is brought up, if not to honour and worship and make idols of Brutus and Harmodius and Aristogeiton, the tyrannicides of old, at least to defend and respect them as pure patriots and martyrs; that up to the age of twenty-four, the right and duty of political assassination, as exemplified in those noble characters, is to say the least an open question with the ingenuous youth of England; and that it is not till we escape from our instructors and come forth to think and act in life that we throw off this perilous and false doctrine,—then we do say that the enormous and *mysterious* horror expressed by so many members of Parliament, who have themselves gone through this peculiar phase of hero-worship, is ludicrously misplaced and can scarcely be sincere. And further, we are not quite sure that any, even of those gentlemen, who remember and will duly weigh the case of the Emperor Paul I. of Russia, will be inclined to argue that there can be *no* case in which the removal by secret violence of an incurable and unmanageable brute may become a defensible necessity.

We say, then, that the member for Halifax need not be at all ashamed of his friendship for Mazzini, and was right and manly to avow it. We go further, and we concur with what was said by Mr. Bright in his generous and manly speech on the subject, that we should not be disposed to think very highly of the love of liberty, or the regard for justice, or the hatred of oppression and of wrong, of any Englishman who has not sympathised with the cause of Italy and the efforts of Italian patriots, and whose sympathies, at all events in early youth, did not carry him to the very verge of aiding those men and joining in those efforts:—fortunate if those generous and youthful impulses never led him to become the uninten-

tional assistant of outraged and maddened exiles whose nature was not scrupulous and whose means were not unexceptionable; fortunate, also, if his ardent sympathy with a great and noble cause never brought him into connection with patriots less pure and less noble than Mazzini.

And now one word as to the second charge against Mr. Stansfeld—namely, that he gave to M. Mazzini's correspondence the protection of his address and name. Have we forgotten—above all have honourable members who sit on the Opposition side of the House forgotten—*why Mazzini's correspondence comes to need this abnormal protection?* Have the events and the discussions of February and March, 1845, passed from their memory? Have they forgotten that it then came to light that Mazzini's letters had been, at the suggestion of foreign Powers, habitually opened at the English Post Office; that information gleaned from those letters of a wild plot (*which Mazzini endeavoured to prevent*) was conveyed to the Austrian Government; and that in consequence of that information the unhappy conspirators were seized, several slain in fight, and nine, including the Brothers Bandiera, executed in cold blood? After this, and remembering this, where is the liberal Englishman, where the friend of Italy, where the lover of justice, who would not feel prompted to do all he could to secure Mazzini's correspondence from future official violation abroad? And who would blame men for yielding to those promptings? And how did it happen that, remembering this, even Mr. Stansfeld's friends joined in condemning the use he had permitted his friend (when he was not yet in office) to make of his house? And, still more curious, how was it that during the whole course of the discussion, no one referred to those very questionable proceedings in 1844 and 1845, which rendered it necessary, in order to protect English official honour and Italian patriotic lives, that Mazzini's correspondence should be carried on under feigned names and at the addresses of personal friends?

## THE ASSASSINATION OF MR. LINCOLN.

(*From "The Economist," 29th April*, 1865.)

THE murder of Mr. Lincoln is a very great and very lamentable event, perhaps the greatest and most lamentable which has occurred since the *coup d'état*, if not since Waterloo. It affects directly and immensely the welfare of the three most powerful countries in the world, America, France, and England, and it affects them all for evil. Time, circumstances, and agent have all conspired as by some cruel perversity to increase the mischief and the horror of an act which at any moment, or under any circumstances, would have been most mischievous and horrible. It is not merely that a great man has passed away, but he has disappeared at the very time when his special greatness seemed almost essential to the world, when his death would work the widest conceivable evil, when the chance of replacing him, even partially, approached nearest to zero, and he has been removed in the very way which almost alone among causes of death could have doubled the political injury entailed by the decease itself. His death destroys one of the strongest guarantees for continued peace between his country and the external world, while his murder diminishes almost indefinitely the prospects of reconciliation between the two camps into which that country has for four years been divided. At the very instant of all others, when North and South had most reason to see in his character a possibility of reunion, and to dread the accession of his inevitable successor, a Southerner murders him to place that successor in his chair, gives occasion for an explosion of sectional hate, and makes a man who has acknowledged that hate, master of armies which can give to that hate an almost limitless expression in act. At the very moment when the dread of war between the Union and Western

Europe seemed, after inflicting incessant injury for four years, about to die away, a murderer deprives us of the man who had most power and most will to maintain peace, and thereby enthrones another whose tendencies are at best an unknown quantity, but who is sure, from inexperience, to sway more towards violence than his predecessor. The injury done alike to the North, to the South, and to the world, is so irremediable, the consequences of the act may be so vast, and are certainly so numerous, that it is with some diffidence we attempt to point out the extent of the American loss, and the result that loss may produce.

The greatness of the American loss seems to us to consist especially in this. To guide and moderate a great revolution, and heal up the wounds created by Civil War, it is essential that the Government should be before all things strong. If it is weak it is sure either to be violent, or to allow some one of the jarring sections of the community to exhibit violence unrestrained, to rely on terror as the French Convention, under a false impression of its own dangers, did; or to permit a party to terrorise, as the first Ministry of Louis the Eighteenth did. The "Reign of Terror" and the "*Terreur Blanc*" were alike owing, one to an imaginary the other to a real weakness on the part of the governing power. There are so many passions to be restrained, so many armed men to be dealt with, so many fanatic parties to convince, so many private revenges to check, so many extra legal acts to do, that nothing except an irresistible Government can ever hope to secure the end which every Government by instinct tries to attain, namely, external order. Now, the difficulty of creating a strong Government in America is almost insuperable. The people in the first place dislike Government, not this or that administration, but Government in the abstract, to such a degree that they have invented a quasi philosophical theory, proving that Government, like war or harlotry, is a "necessary evil". Moreover, they have constructed a machinery in the shape of States, specially and deliberately calculated to impede central action, to stop the exercise of power, to reduce Government, except so far as it is expressed in arrests by the parish constable, to

an impossibility. They have an absolute Parliament, and though they have a strong Executive, it is, when opposed to the people, or even when in advance of the people, paralysed by a total absence of friends. To make this weakness permanent they have deprived even *themselves* of absolute power, have first forbidden themselves to change the Constitution except under circumstances which never occur, and have then, through the machinery of the common schools, given to that Constitution the moral weight of a religious document. The construction of a strong Government, therefore, *i.e.* of a Government able to do great acts very quickly, is really impossible, except in one event. The head of the Executive may, by an infinitesimal chance, be a man so exactly representative of the people, that his acts always represent their thoughts, so shrewd that he can steer his way amidst the legal difficulties piled deliberately in his path, and so good that he desires power only for the national ends. The chance of obtaining such a man was, as we say, infinitesimal; but the United States, by a good fortune, of which they will one day be cruelly sensible, had obtained him. Mr. Lincoln, by a rare combination of qualities—patience, sagacity, and honesty—by a still more rare sympathy, not with the best of his nation but the best average of his nation, and by a moderation rarest of all, had attained such vast moral authority that he could make all the hundred wheels of the Constitution move in one direction without exerting any physical force. For example, in order to secure the constitutional prohibition of slavery, it is absolutely essential that some *forty-eight* separate representative bodies, differing in modes of election, in geographical interests, in education, in prejudices, should harmoniously and strongly co-operate, and so immense was Mr. Lincoln's influence—an influence, it must be remembered, unsupported in this case by power—that had he lived, that co-operation, of which statesmen might well despair, would have been a certainty. The President had, in fact, attained to the very position—the dictatorship—to use a bad description, required by revolutionary times. At the same time, this vast authority, not having been seized illegally, and being wielded by a man radically good—

who for example really reverenced civil liberty and could tolerate venomous opposition—could never be directed to ends wholly disapproved by the ways of those who conferred it. It was, in fact, the authority which nations find it so very hard to secure, which only Italy and America have in our time secured, a good and benevolent, but resistless temporary despotism. That despotism, moreover, was exercised by a man whose brain was a very great one. We do not know in history such an example of the growth of a ruler in wisdom as was exhibited by Mr. Lincoln. Power and responsibility visibly widened his mind and elevated his character. Difficulties, instead of irritating him as they do most men, only increased his reliance on patience; opposition, instead of ulcerating, only made him more tolerant and determined. The very style of his public papers altered, till the very man who had written in an official despatch about "Uncle Sam's web feet," drew up his final inaugural in a style which extorted from critics so hostile as the *Saturday Reviewers*, a burst of involuntary admiration. A good but benevolent temporary despotism, wielded by a wise man, was the very instrument the wisest would have desired for the United States; and in losing Mr. Lincoln, the Union has lost it. The great authority attached by law to the President's office reverts to Mr. Johnson, but the far greater moral authority belonging to Mr. Lincoln disappears. There is no longer any person in the Union whom the Union dare or will trust to do exceptional acts, to remove popular generals, to override crotchety States, to grant concessions to men in arms, to act when needful, as in the Trent case, athwart the popular instinct.

2. The consequences of this immense loss can as yet scarcely be conjectured, for the one essential datum, the character of the President, is not known. It is probable that that character has been considerably misrepresented. Judging from information necessarily imperfect, we have formed an *ad interim* opinion that Mr. Johnson is very like an average Scotch tradesman, very shrewd, very pushing, very narrow, and very obstinate, inclined to take the advice of any one with more *knowledge* than himself, but unable to act on it when opposed

to certain central convictions, not oppressive, but a little indifferent if his plans result in oppression, and subject to fits of enthusiasm as hard to deal with as fits of drunkenness. Should this estimate prove correct, we shall have in the United States a Government absolutely resolved upon immediate abolition, whatever its consequences, foolish or wise according to the character of its advisers, very incapable of diplomacy, which demands above all things knowledge, very firm, excessively unpopular with its own agents, and liable to sudden and violent changes of course, so unaccountable as almost to appear freaks. Such a Government will find it difficult to overcome the thousand difficulties presented by the organisation of the States, by the bitterness of partisans, or by the exasperated feelings of the army, and will be driven, we fear, to overcome them by violence, or at least to deal with them in a spirit of unsparing rigour. It is, therefore, we conceive, *primâ facie* probable that the South will be slower to come in, and much less ready to settle down when it has come in, than it would have been under Mr. Lincoln ; and this reluctance will be increased by the consciousness that the North has at length obtained a plausible excuse for relentless severity. It will also be much more ready to escape its difficulties by foreign war. Beyond those two somewhat vague propositions, there are as yet too few data whatever for judgment. Least of all are there data to decide whether the North will adhere to the policy of moderation. Upon the whole we think they will, the average American showing in politics that remarkable lenity which arises from perfect freedom, and the consequent absence of fear ; but he is also excitable, and it is on the first direction of that excitement that everything will depend. If it takes the direction of vengeance, Mr. Johnson, whose own mind has been embittered against the planters by family injuries, may break loose from his Cabinet ; but if, as is much more probable, it takes the direction of over-reverence for the policy of the dead, he must coerce his own tendencies until time and the sobering effect of great power have extinguished them. He is certainly a strong man, though of rough type, and the effect of power on the strong is usually to soften.

## POLITICS AS A PROFESSION.

*(From "The Economist," 17th June, 1865.)*

MR. GLADSTONE opened a very grave question the other day when, defending his son's candidature at Chester, he maintained that statesmanship, like every serious calling to which men devote themselves, was a profession, and that it has this in common with all other professions—that no man can expect to attain high eminence or great success in it unless he enters it while young, and gives himself up to it pretty exclusively. At a moment when the subject of Parliamentary Reform is about to be mooted on a hundred hustings by men who have never given any serious thoughts to its many complications and its momentous consequences, it will not be amiss to consider this one of the several difficulties which lie ahead of us in the course of action in which so many zealous politicians are anxious to embark the country, and which many more have come to regard as inevitable, even if not desirable.

Mr. Gladstone is perfectly right: Statesmanship—political business—is a profession which a man must learn while young, and to which he must serve a practical apprenticeship; and in England the House of Commons is the only school for acquiring the necessary skill, aptitude, and knowledge. Those who enter in middle life may be admirable senators, sagacious legislators, competent checks upon an extravagant or an interfering Government, excellent representatives of the popular feeling,—but they will scarcely ever become Ministers, nor would they be very successful and capable ministers if they did. There are many reasons why this should be so. Office requires much drudgery and routine training,—and men of five-and-forty do not like this. They do not want to go to school at their time of life. Moreover, they would half despise inferior

posts, and yet could scarcely, unless in very exceptional cases indeed, aspire to superior ones. If they have attained wealth —and most men who enter Parliament late in life have done so, and go into Parliament principally because they have done so—the emoluments of office are no object to them, and its labour would be a nuisance to them, while their vanity would be scarcely flattered by a position which confers little real power, and makes them mere Government subordinates. If they have attained eminence, political or other, they cannot accept subordinate posts without compromising at once their opinions and their dignity; and it is only in the very rarest cases that a seat in the Cabinet can or would be offered to them,—while it is still more rare that it would be advisable either for themselves or for the country that they should accept it. Mr. Bright and Mr. Cobden, and perhaps Mr. Forster, are the only names that now occur to us, of politicians who did not enter Parliament young and served no apprenticeship to political business, who appeared naturally fitted for and entitled to claim Ministerial position; and none of these gentlemen could well have taken subordinate positions which would involve to a great degree silence and self-abnegation;—while the extreme opinions of two at least of them (to say nothing of rigidity of character and habits) would place Cabinet office beyond their reach, at all events in the first instance. Mr. Cobden is about the only exception that could be pointed to; and he was not offered a seat in the Cabinet till so late in life that his Ministerial career must have been short, and might not have been efficient. We cannot at this moment remember a single instance of any British Minister of the least note who did not enter Parliament at an early age, and devote himself to politics as a profession,—unless, indeed, Mr. Lowe and Mr. Stansfeld may be regarded as instances;—and certainly they are scarcely exceptions which could be quoted to disprove the rule.

Now, it is of the greatest consequence to the country that we should have a secure provision for a constant and adequate supply of embryo statesmen, of future Ministers. Parliament with us is not merely a legislative body:—it is the body out

of which exclusively our Executive Government is chosen,—and it is not well, and indeed cannot be permitted, that the Government should be formed from the Upper House only, or chiefly. We must have a supply of young Commoners who are qualified, and who aspire, to become Ministers and in time Cabinet Ministers. How is this supply to be provided? In former times, as we know, it was provided mainly by the small boroughs. Young men of great families or aristocratic connections often found seats for counties, and do so still, and will always do so. But young men of promise, of early ambition, of superior powers, of independent means, who wished to devote themselves to political life and felt within them the ability to rise to eminence, had seldom much difficulty in obtaining seats for small or close boroughs. While sitting for these, they had opportunities of showing their genius and winning their spurs, and, having once made themselves a name, they were pretty sure of a permanent seat, and were often afterwards asked to represent large cities. But large cities never chose them in the first instance—unless, indeed, they chanced to have great local influence and connection. It would, we believe, be impossible to point to a single name of political and *Ministerial* eminence who, not being an aristocrat or county magnate personally or by near connection, did not originally sit, and has not habitually or most frequently sat, for small boroughs. Close boroughs are all but extinct; small boroughs still remain in sufficient numbers to afford openings for some of the young men of whom future statesmen may be made; but unfortunately as a fact, these seats are generally secured either by the scions of some noble or quasi-noble family, or by men of mere wealth, or mercantile or railway influence. If, as most Parliamentary Reformers either demand or are prepared to concede, these small constituencies are to be swept away or largely reduced,—how are the class of young men of whom we are speaking, and whom we want for our future Ministers, to find entrance into Parliament—young men, that is, who have nothing to recommend them but talent, honesty, independent means, laudable ambition, and a resolution to devote themselves to the most honourable and arduous of all profes-

sions,—young men who are neither extreme Radicals, nor millionaires, nor younger sons of Peers or great Statesmen, nor members of mighty county families?

That is the problem—and it is no easy one to solve. Counties, as we know, will not return them,—nor will large towns. Large towns will often return Ministers of established fame—never embryo Ministers of mere promise. No actual —and with perhaps one exception, no possible Minister—ever *entered* Parliament for the first time for a great popular town constituency. Of eighty-one members who now sit for boroughs over 50,000 inhabitants, only eight are, or have been, or can be expected to be Ministers—and of these four are lawyers, and hold or have held mere legal office. Nothing can be more natural; no political fact can be expected to be so constant. There are three sorts of men whom large boroughs will elect. *First*, popular orators, holding advanced opinions, echoing and representing popular creeds, sympathising warmly with the masses, devoted to their interests, and supporting or submitting to their dictation. Mr. Bright, Mr. Forster, Mr. Stansfeld, will always be sure of seats for the great centres of industry, and it is well they should be; no fitter or abler representatives, and few more useful senators, could be found. But besides these, and in far larger numbers, will be found men who are chosen not for oratorical ability, or for any ability at all, but simply because they represent the radical opinions of the numerical majority.—*Secondly*, large boroughs will choose official statesmen of proved ability and settled eminence, who are liberal enough for most constituencies, and would reflect honour upon any. Thus Lord John Russell sat for London, Mr. Villiers for Wolverhampton, Sir H. Cairns for Belfast, Sir R. Collier for Plymouth, Sir C. Wood for Halifax, and Mr. Milner Gibson for Manchester and Ashton. But not one, we believe, of these gentlemen sat for those places to begin with, or if they did, it was the lawyers who had already made a name in another field.—*Thirdly*, and chiefly, and properly enough, great cities will return fellow-townsmen—men who have endeared themselves to those among whom they live, who have attained local estimation

and local eminence by local services—who have grown wealthy by years of industry and influential by years of municipal attention. Thus *Birkenhead* returns Mr. Laird; *Blackburn*, Mr. Hornby and Mr. Pilkington; *Oldham*, Mr. Hibbert; *Leeds*, Mr. Baines; *Nottingham*, Mr. Paget; *Liverpool*, Mr. Horsfall and Mr. Ewart; *Manchester*, Mr. Turner and Mr. Bazley, and so on. This, too, is quite right, and desirable in a degree as well as natural. But all these men, by the very presumption of the eminence they have attained, and the wealth they have acquired, and the services they have rendered, must be men of mature age—untrained for ministerial life, and too old to begin such training.

The consequences are inevitable, and are already beginning to be obvious. As the older race of statesmen, who began their career in the days of close boroughs, are dying out, few of the same class are rising up to take their places; and the result is a marked tendency in each successive Cabinet to become more and more aristocratic. The members out of whom future Ministers are to be made belong in an ever-augmenting proportion to great county or great noble families; a larger and larger number of the Cabinet sit in the House of Lords, or are closely allied with it; of the present Whig Cabinet only three are unconnected Commoners, and of the probable Tory Cabinet scarcely more;—so that unless Reformers are very careful and foreseeing in their operations, unless they are vigilant and sagacious to provide substitutes for what they propose to destroy or change, measures which are devised in the popular interests and intended to give preponderance to popular views, may end in being aristocratic in their practical operation to a wholly unexpected degree. A Ministry composed of Peers and landed gentry, with a House of Commons composed of Radicals, Railway Directors, elderly local celebrities, and county magnates, is not exactly the combination which thoughtful and learned Liberals would most desire to bring about.

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## OXFORD AND MR. GLADSTONE.

(*From "The Economist," 22nd July*, 1865.)

FORTY years ago Mr. Canning said, in a speech on Catholic Emancipation, "I was warned when the question first crossed my path that I must relinquish the most cherished object of my life—the representation of the University of Oxford. I made my choice. The occasion is past. I will speak of it no more." Oxford has been curiously consistent. When Mr. Canning so spoke, her voice in Parliament was a peculiar voice. It was a conspicuous advantage,—a "blue ribbon" in the speech of those aristocratic days when visible symbols had a meaning, that the mere largeness of the cultivated world prevent their having now. To sit then for Oxford gave then of itself an unequalled prestige both in the House and out of it. The political world of that day, mostly educated at two Universities, recognised in the most fascinating and aristocratic of these Universities an inherent charm. All this is now gone. Parliament has been reformed, and a race of men educated "nowhere," as would have been said once, but quite able intellectually to hold their own, throng the lower House. And Oxford has herself to blame. It is she that has dissolved the charm which she inherited. The new race of members were deeply susceptible of cultivated influence, or why did Mr. Gladstone's words so fascinate Liverpool and Manchester? But Oxford will choose her worst men and will not choose her best. The cause lies deep in her teaching and that of the public schools. She gives, as Eton gives, a splendid teaching to the few, and a contemptible teaching to the many. Consequently, the products of her teaching in no way represent her teachers. The mass of men who, for the sake of orders, or for any other reason, take a common degree, no more represent

Oxford than a common Eton fag represented the knowledge of Dr. Hawtrey. You cannot make a good University constituency where the necessary attainments of a graduate represent a feeble and irregular culture. To create great men is not enough; Oxford has quite done her share of that in this generation. To cite but one case, she has trained both Newman and Jowett, the greatest leader of Anglican anti-liberalism and the greatest leader of Anglican liberalism which the age has produced. But Oxford has produced (as we have heard a tutor regret) a "stupid average," and it is this average which rules the poll. It is this average which excluded Mr. Canning, which rejected Sir R. Peel, which rejected Mr. Gladstone,—which, in a word, refused to elect the three statesmen who were in their generations the best products of her teaching, and who were alike in this—that they each at least tried to combine the true Conservatism and the true Liberalism—the inheritance of the past and the necessities of the present. Everybody understands the errors of their fathers, but it is not every Oxford man who sees that in rejecting Mr. Gladstone he has repeated the error of those who rejected Sir R. Peel and excluded Mr. Canning.

It is better, however, for England that Oxford has decided as she has. It is of great importance that the statesmen of England should sit for constituencies of a proper class. There are two sorts of seats, one of which we may call special and peculiar, and the other of which we may call neutral and judicial. The first have particular opinions and interests; they have singular wants and notions, and their representatives are sent to express them. Accordingly, these representatives assume almost inevitably the character of advocates. They have a case which they wish to bring before the House; they have a lesson to teach it foreign to the experience and different from the notions of ordinary educated men. There ought to be some special constituencies in Parliament for every such special type of thought—some for the shipowner, some for the manufacturer, some for the landlord, some for the clergy; but there ought to be a vastly greater number of constituencies of no aberrant type, no eccentric idiosyncrasy, which simply re-

present the common voice of educated men, which must hear what the commissioned advocates of classes allege, weigh their arguments, estimate their often conflicting assertions, and in the last resort decide. Oxford is, as will be admitted both by her admirers and by her critics, a special constituency, and therefore she ought not to be represented by a ruling statesman. She must enforce upon him special notions, singular ideas, unusual thoughts; she must, if she does her duty, press upon him the advocacy of her characteristic creed. But a great statesman cannot be a class advocate. He should sit for a constituency which is the judge of other constituencies—which can hear and listen—which represents the general voice of all England, not the special dialect of any bit of England.

South Lancashire is, upon the whole, and subject to some exceptions, such a constituency. There was an idea in some not very instructed quarters, that if Mr. Gladstone were returned for South Lancashire, he would be pressed into Radicalism by his constituents. We will not discuss the personal compliment to Mr. Gladstone, but look at the constituency. South Lancashire returns two Conservatives, Liverpool two more, and Manchester excludes Mr. Bright's brother because he is Mr. Bright's brother. South Lancashire is a constituency which will wish its representative to coincide in judgment with the entire people of England.

Oxford could have done Mr. Gladstone no greater service than by compelling him to make these speeches at this critical moment. They are statesmanlike speeches. The words in the Manchester speech on reform will remove many misconceptions:—"I have ever been, and I still am, opposed to every sudden and violent change. Never have I spoken a word which, fairly interpreted, gave the smallest countenance to the schemes—if such schemes there be—of any who might view with indifference the passing of precipitate and extensive measures that might endanger by their very suddenness the true and just balance of the powers of the constitution; but this I say, that the true and just balance of those powers would not be destroyed, but improved, by a fair and liberal

and sensible—not a sweeping nor overwhelming—admission of our brethren of the labouring community to the privileges of the suffrage." And the whole of these speeches advertise his genius. No other man could make one such oration at three o'clock in the afternoon, and another great oration at eight o'clock in the evening. The impression of his facility in Manchester is wonderful. They say, "He goes down to make a great speech at the Free Trade Hall just as another man goes to eat his lunch". So much effectual, telling, producible power has not been exhibited in England for many a long day. One fact is very significant. The practical question now is, Shall Mr. Disraeli or Mr. Gladstone lead the next House of Commons? In Mr. Gladstone's case, there has been vehement criticism and eager admiration. He has, to quote again a phrase of Schiller which he himself once quoted, "been much hated and also much beloved". But of Mr. Disraeli there has been no affectionate word. No one has ventured to say that he wishes to have any confidence in him, or that he wishes to be led by him.

## MR. CARLYLE ON MR. EYRE.

(*From "The Economist," 15th September*, 1866.)

MR. THOMAS CARLYLE has come out of his retirement and scornful remoteness from public affairs to "run into" one of the "public noises" of the day. In the tranquillity of "Ripple Court, Ringwould, Dover," having received a "call" from one "Hamilton Hume, Esq., Hon. Sec. Eyre Defence Fund," to join the committee of that enlightened body, Mr. Carlyle answered by declaring "the clamour raised against Governor Eyre" to be "disgraceful to the good sense of England"; Mr. Eyre being "a just, humane, and valiant man," who, by slaying some hundreds of coloured folk of an "inhuman and half-brutish type," causing a political opponent to be hanged on suspicion, and burning some thousand houses, thereby rendered services of "incalculable value" to this empire. Mr. Gordon, and the man who was stuck up at four hundred yards like a Wimbledon target, to be shot at, and those who were beaten with wire whips, only got, it seems, in the estimation of Mr. Carlyle, "their wages for their sad industry". Mr. Carlyle, after a deliberate survey of the conduct of Mr. Eyre, is of opinion that "this Governor merits," not "penalty and clamour," but "honour, and thanks, and *wise imitation*". Consequently the whole weight of Mr. Carlyle's conviction and good wishes go with Mr. Hume and the other *con amore* defenders of Mr. Eyre and his cruelties to his political opponents and the coloured folk generally. Should there be a riot in London or Birmingham, Glasgow or Dublin, the "governors" there for the time being have in Mr. Eyre a model. They are to imitate his conduct and hold a six weeks' carnival, proclaiming martial law, hanging, slaying, flogging, using God's own image for target practice at four

hundred yards, and then, when the festival of Justice, Humanity, and Valour is over, they are to have honour and thanks from the survivors. Is it possible to carry further the worship of brute force and of the sort of order in which brute force delights? If this is the authentic outcome of hero worship, it justifies, apart from other grounds, the distrust with which that new religion is regarded—a religion which dethrones law in favour of Caprice, and thrusts an usurping personal wilfulness into the seat of Justice. The English nation undoubtedly "loves order and the prompt suppression of seditions," but we are not aware that the nation holds in reverence the names of Jeffreys and Kirke, or worships the authors of the massacre of Glencoe, or thinks those persons the perfection of their species who charged with the yeomanry at Peterloo. The English nation applauds the prompt suppression of seditions, but up to this time it has not applauded the perpetration of unnecessary cruelties in the process, and it has guarded, or sought to guard, in a thousand ways, against slaying on suspicion, and especially the slaying of a political opponent. Mr. Carlyle's defence of Mr. Eyre means, if it means anything, that we are to reverse our system of government by law, based as nearly as may be on principles of justice, sweep away all the safeguards of personal liberty, and set up instead the will of one man, who may be an Aristides, but who may also be an Eyre. We say this would be a step backward towards barbarism—nay, it would *be* barbarism, for it would carry us back to the strife of the strong with the strong, and whether strength and justice were allied would be mere accident. On Mr. Carlyle's principles of judging human actions, as exemplified in this Eyre case, Philip II. and Alva have a right to the honour and thanks of posterity. Hoorn, Egmont, and William the Silent only got their "wages for their sad industry," when they were slain. In a small way the exploits of Mr. Eyre in Jamaica were not unlike those of the Council of Blood. Yet he had far less on him the stress of necessity. After the 15th he might have brought every criminal to justice without the aid of martial law, and, great as was his offence in causing Mr. Gordon to be hanged, his greatest offence is that he put an

affront on the majesty of the law, and, for the time, cancelled the ripest fruits of ages of civilisation by abolishing the distinction between the savage and the cultivated man. That is the greatest offence of Mr. Eyre, who could only "govern" on the very rudest principles of club law, and we should certainly "consider it of evil omen to the country and to its highest interests in these times," to use Mr. Carlyle's own words, had there been no "clamour raised against Governor Eyre". That would have been indeed "disgraceful," not only to the "good sense," but to the sense of justice of England. And it is because the English nation has *not* changed, and has some regard for its honour, that there is this clamour which is naturally so distasteful to the great prophet of Physical Force. Up to a certain point Mr. Eyre showed promptitude and energy in suppressing a riot; and for that let him have honour and thanks, but after that point promptitude and energy settled down into deliberate cruelty and malignity; and self-respect and the "highest interests" of the country bid us condemn these.

We cannot help thinking that this strange championship of a purely Muscular Morality by men of high intellectual reputation will have a very detrimental effect. If this is seen to be the legitimate outcome of literary culture, depend upon it literary culture will be more distrusted in the world of politics than ever it has been before. Even the squires, unless they are bitten by Mr. Bright, looking on these Jamaica transactions by the light of Quarter Sessions, feel that Game itself would not tempt them to commit such acts of naked injustice. It is of little importance that men of the stamp of Lord Cardigan should patronise wholesale illegality. Nothing better is expected of them. But Mr. Carlyle, and even Mr. Ruskin, occupy a far other place in the public estimation, and exercise a far other influence than the hero of the black bottle, to whose level for the moment they have descended; and we say that when they go out of their way to become the advocates of Jamaica—we shall no longer talk of Jedburgh—justice, they do a very grievous injury to the common cause which they as well as we have really at heart. If the active intervention of

very highly cultivated men would bring about a feeling of ready acquiescence in the conduct of affairs based on an imitation of Mr. Eyre, then the less these very highly cultivated persons intervene the better for us and them, for they would stand quite as good a chance of sharing the fate of Gordon as we or any other of Her Majesty's subjects. It is absolutely necessary in the interest of the highest as well as the meanest of Englishmen that the contemptuous disregard of the safeguards of personal liberty shown by Mr. Carlyle and his colleagues should receive public reprobation; and it is far more painful to witness their serious errors—because they ought to know better—than to read of the crimes and blunders of the poor coloured folk of Jamaica, whose very inferiority should have secured them the justest treatment.

## WHY MR. DISRAELI HAS SUCCEEDED.

(*From "The Economist," 7th September*, 1867.)

MR. DISRAELI once said that those "who went down to posterity were about as rare as planets"; but he will succeed in going down there himself. The Reform Act of 1867 will be remembered as long as the Constitution of England is remembered. Why so great a change was made so silently and with so little national discussion will amaze our children—just as we of this generation cannot comprehend the Reform discussions of 1832, and why so much was hoped from a measure upon its face so prosaic. But Mr. Disraeli is identified with it. His name was the first on the back of the Bill of the names of those who brought it in, and his will be the name which posterity will think of with it. And the reward is just. It *is* Mr. Disraeli's Bill. Without professing to know what happened in the Cabinet, so much as this is certain. Mr. Disraeli all along wished to go down very low, to beat the Whigs—if possible, the Radicals too—by basing the support of the Conservative party upon a lower class than those which they could influence. For this end he induced his party to surrender their creed and their policy; he altered what his followers had to say, even more than the Constitution under which they are going to live. How then did he attain such a singular success?

It is usual to say that he attained it by fraud and deceit. And we certainly are not about to defend his morality. On the contrary, we have attacked it often, and, if need were, would attack it now. But a little study of human affairs is enough to show that fraud alone—fraud by itself—does not succeed; it is too ugly and coarse for man to bear; it is only when disguised in great qualities, and helped on by fine talents,

that it prospers. What, then, in this case, were the accompanying aids?

Mr. Disraeli is one of the most observant students of human life in England. He said many years since of Sir R. Peel, "He was a bad judge of character. The prosperous routine of his youth was not favourable to this talent. He never had to *struggle*." But Mr. Disraeli has had to struggle. His career is of his own making; it has no precedent; he is the one literary adventurer, who has led the House of Commons, or who is likely, perhaps to lead it, if wealth is strengthened by the new Bill as much as seems probable. In the course of his aspiring youth he observed all classes of men—not deeply and profoundly perhaps; it is only the very greatest men who do that; but distinctly, and in their plain traits. His early novels are studies of conspicuous life. In them all the obvious momentary part of English society is sketched very vividly and very well.

The whole of this observant faculty, which was trained in social life, has been concentrated on Parliament. For years he has sat almost silent—never raising petty discussions and confusing old people who thought a leader of Opposition ought to be always opposing, but watching day by day the course of events till he has, perhaps, the best and nicest Parliamentary memory of his generation. Probably he required all this culture. He has not—at least experience seems to show that he has not—instinctive tact. There is even at times an inaptitude to comprehend those around him. When he asked last Session, "Why, what opinions have we changed?" there was a roar as much from his own side of the House as from the opposite; and, perhaps, there was hardly a man there who did not understand better than Mr. Disraeli why it was *gauche* to say that. He failed egregiously in his first speech, though it would be absurd to press that by itself, as many great speakers have failed at first, and most learn by paining their hearers, but there was a sort of opaque, undiscerning vanity about the performance, which was singularly unpromising. Indeed as for instinctive tact, Mr. Disraeli has made stupendous blunders: a Budget which everybody was

to like, but which no one would accept; an Indian Bill, at which everybody laughed; speeches in Opposition innumerable, which made men say, till Lord Palmerston died, "That Dizzy was the Whigs' best friend". But now, with the training of years, he has developed a sort of second-hand tact by memory, which serves him well, and is surer than any he has to fight against.

Mr. Disraeli is not profound in the least, and perhaps he would laugh at telling what he thinks his best creed. But he has a fatal facility in suggesting hazy theories which would puzzle an Aristotle. The driest and hardest thinker could never get right if he persisted in tying his words into the pretty puzzles which Mr. Disraeli delights in, and which so often take. His language upon abstract subjects, for upon those of this world he can talk plainly enough, is to that of a thinker by profession—to the language, say, of Mr. Mill—what discolouring artificial light is to daylight. You never know what he is talking about, or whether it means much or little. But, though not deep, Mr. Disraeli's mind is beyond measure quick, and, as far as it penetrates, original. There is nothing routine about him. He got the House of Commons to sit at unheard-of hours—from 2 till 7—and seemed to think nothing of it, though some grave members thought it almost a Reform Bill in itself. It has been said, not very wisely, that the best general is he who best knows how to repair a defeat; and if that were translated, it might be said that Mr. Disraeli was the best leader of the House of Commons, for he knows how to glide out of a scrape better than anyone.

To this quickness of a keen man, he joins, by some freak of nature, the imperturbability of an apathetic man. Whether he is quite as impassive as he seems, may indeed be doubted. Very near observers are said to be able to detect shades of wincing. But very impassible he must be; and it is a sort of "double first" in skirmishing talent to be so quick to hit, and so hard to *be* hit. No doubt the opportunities of his career have been favourable—at least, they look so now that he has made a good use of them. He found the Tory party

at the death of Lord George Bentinck almost barren of great ability in the House of Commons. The trained official Peelites who before led the party had followed Sir Robert Peel. The grade of gentry who fill the country seats, and mostly compose the Conservative party in the Commons, are perhaps the least able and valuable part of English society. They have neither the responsibilities nor the culture of great noblemen, and they have never felt the painful need of getting on, which sharpens the middle class. They have a moderate sort of wealth which teaches them little, and a steady sort of mind fit for common things, but they have no flexibility and they have no ideas. Almost the worst of the class, too, are often sent to Parliament, and the best left out, because a foolish prejudice requires that the member shall have land within the county. Mr. Disraeli found himself with the most ingenious and manipulating intellect of his generation at the head of the "Army of Fogies," and the result is what we see.

What have been the consequences of the slow honesty of the Tory party, and the quick dishonesty of the Tory leader, future years will unfold better than we can understand them now. But it is well for us to see exactly what the forces were; and that it was not fraud itself which won, but fraud in a convenient place, and with singular ability.

## THE DEATH OF LORD BROUGHAM.

(*From "The Economist," 16th May*, 1868.)

SOME one said of the quiet old age of Wilkes that he was a "Volcano burnt out," and much the same is true of Brougham. Of so little importance was his death, and so natural was it that a man of nearly ninety should die, that the event was not even telegraphed to England from the South of France where it happened. Perhaps, if years ago, in the eager vigour of his genius, he had been told that such would be the end, it would have been one of the keenest pains he ever could have felt. His love of fame, as his friends would call it; his vanity, as his enemies would say (if, indeed, his real enemies have not now all died out),—would have felt more than most things the fact of quiet and silent extinction.

No one, however, who knows, whether by memory or by study, the recent political history of England, can hear with indifference that "Henry Brougham," as men used to call him, is no more. His name carries us back to a period which seems far longer ago than in years it is, to the time before the Reform Bill of 1832. It was in the reign of Toryism, after the peace, that Lord Brougham gained his renown, and those are the years of his life that will live in history. What the Toryism of that time was—how short-sighted and how ignorant—is almost forgotten. Dr. Arnold used to call the eighteenth century the "misused trial time of modern Europe"; it would be much truer to call the years from 1815 to 1832 the misused trial time of the Tory party in England. They had a remarkable advantage; the French war had ended in a splendid victory; and the ministry who had managed the war naturally gained the credit. Their rule was popular in the country. If they had governed with intelligence and modera-

tion—if they had governed as Mr. Pitt governed before, and Mr. Canning tried to govern afterwards—subsequent history might have been much changed. But they governed in the spirit of Lord Eldon and Lord Sidmouth; they made no concessions; they tried to keep *everything* as it was; they made the existing Government responsible for every kind of abuse; they not only upheld the prerogative of the Crown and the power of the House of Lords, but cheating in charities and death for petty larceny. We wish the Marquis of Salisbury would leave the Great Eastern Railway to other hands, and write the history of the Tories after the peace. We should then know—not from a Liberal who must be prejudiced, but from a Tory attached to real Toryism—how narrow were the opinions, and how pernicious was the conduct, of those who ruled when Toryism was predominant. They would amend no grievance, because it might impair the English Constitution, and so they made themselves and the Constitution responsible for all grievances.

This was just the opportunity for a great agitator, and Lord Brougham had the gifts of a great agitator. If you take up the volumes of the old debates in Parliament, you will not turn many pages without finding Mr. Brougham calling attention to some grievance, and proposing some reform. Slavery, the state of the representation, the cruelty of the criminal law, the cost of the civil law, the harsh acts of an unsympathising administration—all these, and a hundred similar subjects, were for ever on his lips. A wonderful versatility and vast physical power were at his command, and he used them in the cause of the people. There was nothing democratic in his principles; on the contrary, like most of the original Edinburgh reviewers, he held some opinions which would now be thought much too inclined to aristocracy. But he had a strong sense of justice, an intense dislike of human misery, an overpowering impulse to expose fraud, an utter contempt for stupid administration; and these were the qualities then wanting. A liberal politician is said to have observed in Lord Palmerston's time, when some one regretted the decline of energy in the Liberal party—"Ah!

we could be as great men as our fathers if we had but their grievances" ; and in this respect Lord Brougham was very happy, for he lived in the age of grievances, and had every faculty fitted to expose them.

Lord Brougham had the first great essential of an agitator —the faculty of easy anger. He was sure that he did well to be angry on a hundred occasions. To the end of his life— in the peaceful repose of a long old age—he kept this faculty. There was a vicious look about him always ; "if he was a horse, no one would buy him with that eye," some one is reported to have said ; and many persons who joined with him in benevolent undertakings were unpleasantly reminded by sudden outbreaks that philanthropy and conciliation are by no means always united. To the last, a sudden eruption was apt to terrify his quiet co-operators. But in his zenith, a bad temper was of singular use. He could, without any notice, state a grievance with appropriate indignation : most men require an interval to prepare their wrath, but Lord Brougham's was always boiling and only needed a vent. If others could find the occasion of complaint he could always add the vehemence.

In later life, his natural gifts were not so suited to his circumstances. There was something unfitting—so it was thought and so perhaps it was—in making a great agitator Lord Chancellor ; it seemed like making a field preacher Archbishop of Canterbury. No doubt Lord Brougham was a very fair judge, and the stories which were once circulated as to his incompetence have long ceased to be believed. But, at the same time, he was not a great judge. No one will ever refer to his judgments as materials for future decisions ; they contain long and rolling sentences, but they are defective in compact principle. It requires the meditation of a life to be a master of legal principle, and Lord Brougham never meditated, least of all upon law. Nor had he the fine tact for truth, in fact, which has distinguished some judges. At the bar he never was a good "verdict getter," as the phrase is ; he never had the precise instinct of the very words in which to present to a jury the particular case, which some men, other-

wise greatly his inferiors, largely possessed. He talked about and about the point, but he did not delicately hit it without apparent effort, and as if by accident. The same want of intuitive perception followed him to the bench ; he was inferior to Lyndhurst as a judge, just as he was inferior to Scarlett as an advocate.

In Brougham's case, as in so many, his defects were the exaggerations of his merits. Versatility was his great power, and he was always trying to do everything and to do everything at once. When he was Chancellor he wrote a treatise on Hydrostatics, which had to be much altered, if not rewritten, before it could see the light ; and the records of the time are full of anecdotes, in part exaggerated but in substance true, of the universality of his efforts and the eccentricity of his transitions. Why precisely he had to leave political life has never been stated on authority ; but it was, doubtless, connected with the feverishness of his energy, and the incalculability of his actions.

A still more evil genius induced him to attempt " political philosophy ". A poorer book or a worse was never written by a man of great abilities and great political experience than his elaborate treatise on that subject. The Tory lawyers used to say of him—" He means to decide well ; he tries to think, but he can't ". And his political philosophy proves that upon remote, abstract subjects he really could not think. He was not quiet enough, and could not keep still. His philosophical reflections are always pompous, and when new mostly nugatory. By a happy thought, however, he has attained a literary fame likely to last. He roughly sketched for the *Edinburgh Review* some outlines of men whom he had known. This was some thirty years ago ; but even then he was an old statesman dwelling on the past, and losing his hold upon the present. These sketches have been expanded and republished, and are as pleasant reading as anyone is likely to find. He had, so to say, knocked against every considerable man of his time, and his retentive memory preserved an accurate note of the collision. Upon history these " sketches " will probably have a decisive effect, for the agreeable books are those which

historians read most thoroughly, and which fasten most upon their minds. Probably Lord Brougham little thought that it was by these hasty sketches—the casual task of some waste hour—that he would gain his most lasting influence, yet even now they are the only writings of his which are read ; his treatises and speeches no one touches.

In quality Lord Brougham's life may be easily rivalled, but not in quantity. No one is likely to press so much life into the same time as he did into his first fifty years. There was in him, and in some of his contemporaries too, a certain Titanic energy, an unresting, superfluous, nervous power, which the present generation do not possess, and which some of them envy. The race seems to have grown smaller and weaker if finer, like the second race of Greek deities as compared with the first. There are many men who can do better things than Lord Brougham, but no living Englishman is probably his equal in incessant vigour, vehement passion, and many-handed energy.

## LORD LAWRENCE.

(*From "The Economist," 3rd April*, 1869.)

THE elevation of Sir John Lawrence to the Peerage, gazetted on Tuesday, deserves, we think, more than a passing word. No man of our time belonging so clearly to the middle class has ever compelled such complete and universal recognition by the aid of those qualities alone which distinctively belong to the middle class—has ever shown so completely what those qualities are, wherein they succeed, and wherein they are found wanting. The son of an Irish officer with a large family and limited means, forced into the Civil Service almost against his own will, John Lawrence took to the work of governing Asiatics in the same spirit and using the same powers as a self-made engineer or contractor, a Brindley or Brassey, employs in some great material undertaking. Throughout his life till he became Viceroy he was always engaged in reducing something or somebody to order, compelling men and things to work in the groove in which they could be of most use to the common weal as he judged the common weal to be. Now the obstacle was a mountain to be bored, and then a swamp to be filled up; here was a province choked with nobles to be tamed; there was a great city to be rescued from anarchy; now there were mountaineers to be bridled, and again there were mutineers to be pulverised; but whatever it was the work was always done,—done promptly, done thoroughly, and done by the shortest road. The first work of a new Government, particularly in Asia, is always of this kind, and for that first work there probably never was a foreman like John Lawrence. His men, to begin with, were always in hand, because if they were not they were smashed, flung aside, driven out of the way by the plainest and severest of

rebukes. It was not of the slightest use talking about heavy work or inadequate pay or mental idiosyncrasies; there was the work to be done, and you had to do it or go, though if you did it efficiently you were left very much to your own discretion. Till he became Viceroy, and indeed afterwards, Sir John Lawrence governed his subordinates very much as a foundry foreman governs his—by distinct orders, by emphatic rebukes, by a perpetual repetition of the command to get on, to get the work done, and leave off arguing. On the whole this method succeeded in the Punjab better than any finer one would have done. Men of great originality or deep insight or genius could not endure it, and gradually slipped away, or accepted positions in which the goad was more seldom applied; but the majority of officials like to be driven when the coachman is able as well as severe, and Sir John Lawrence gradually organised a troupe most efficient for doing any visible work. Invisible work they could not do, and of all "the Punjabees," as they were latterly called, perhaps not one per cent. has ever added anything to the domain of thought or raised the mental character of the people he governed, or excited any feeling towards the Government except a respectful fear. The work again was always attacked in the same direct fashion. There were many brigands among the States on the hither side of the Sutlej; but Mr. Lawrence had not ruled there a year before they all felt brigandage far too unprofitable a trade. The social evils which produce the crime were not removed, but the crime ceased, because men were not brave enough to go on with it. There were eternal bickerings among the Princes; Sir John Lawrence did not reconcile them; but by determinately making himself master, he extinguished them for the time. When Lord Hardinge was fighting the Sikhs, Delhi was disaffected; but Sir J. Lawrence was ruling there, and though he cured no disaffection, every ruffian in that Alsatia knew that if he acted on his inclinations he would be hanged out of hand. Subsequently in the Punjab, the Government wanted revenue. Sir J. Lawrence said the great fiefholders should be taxed like other people. His far greater, yet far less capable brother, Sir Henry,—a man with ten times Lord

Lawrence's genius, and not a tithe of his efficiency,—talked of native ideas and the use of aristocracies, and the development of native society in its own grooves; but to the strong middle-class man, the deficit in the Exchequer was a Chat Moss to be filled, and in went the feudal system, and with it British chance of ever being loved in the Punjab. The mountain tribes kept making raids, just as our own Highlanders did and for the same motives—want of money and envy of the wealth stored up in the plains. Sir John did not make them devoted loyalists as Pitt did—did not try to do it, but opened a debtor and creditor account with them, and for every penny they stole took back five farthings, and they, though as predatory as ever, had to leave off stealing. In seven years the Punjab was transformed from a native State, in which anarchy was universal and careers numberless, into a British Province in which order was as settled as in Kent, and nobody was allowed to do anything except make money. The hill had been bored, the Moss had been filled, and there was the engine on a level road. Then came the mutiny and, as it chanced, a bit of work with it which exactly suited the genius of the Chief Commissioner. It was not necessary that he should eradicate causes of disaffection, or reawaken loyalty, or change the current of native feeling, but it was necessary that he should take Delhi. So he took it. Columbus never battled with obstacles as Sir John did during those five months of 1857. Stephenson never gave such an example of perseverance and self-reliance. No matter what county was denuded of troops, no matter how dangerous the Sikh levies might seem, no matter how the ground might quake under his feet, till Delhi had been entered the engine could not move, and entered it should be. And at last, in September, when all was nearly over, when the Sikhs had fixed a day for revolt, and the besieging army was on the verge of retreat, the energy of the man broke out into flame, and the peremptory telegram "take Delhi" risked, and saved the Empire. Everything had been flung into the Moss, but it was firm ground at last.

Sir John Lawrence was not as successful as Viceroy, for the work to be done was too invisible,—it was not building a

railway, but devising an organisation to manage railways well. His system of driving instead of stimulating his subordinates, so successful while he could guide his team himself, failed when applied to a dozen teams driven by other men. He had colleagues, and superiors far away, and work to do which he did not personally quite understand, and comparatively he failed to get it done. We say comparatively, because his administration was after all an exceedingly good one, only not so good as those who had observed his career in the Punjab thought they had a right to expect. Whatever he did himself was done well, as for example foreign negotiation, but he infused no extra or unusual strength into other men. It has been observed, and with some truth, that Sir John Lawrence never finds efficient agents in men to whom he cannot give direct and repeated orders,—that he never succeeds in making them do precisely what he wants, either leaving them too much to themselves, or failing to choose the right persons. The Bootan campaign was a series of muddles, and the Orissa famine a catastrophe. The Viceroy too disposed of his patronage too much in the Punjab style—that is, he selected men whom he knew to be efficient, without reflecting that other men whom he did not know, but who had prior claims, might be efficient too. The men promoted were strong according to his conception of strength—that is, they could always do well what they were bidden to do, but the services were disheartened, and the prosperity of an Empire depends more upon the general spirit of its services than on the capacity of a few individuals in prominent place. There was great foresight in the Viceroy and great incisiveness of vision, but he wanted the aristocratic quality—a certain largeness of field, and the quality of the highest genius for government, that of evoking new power. British rule in India is neither better founded nor more enlightened in its ends for his rule; it is only a little stronger. There was a tendency in the Viceroy towards hand-to-mouth politics, to do daily work and to do it well; but to evade very great questions and all questions which did not immediately press. Strict, stern, and clear as his finance for example had been in the Punjab, he sanctioned very bad

Imperial budgets,—one for example was instantly cancelled at home,—and his mode of dealing with Oude showed that the value of a great social experiment was beyond his grasp. No man looked forward till to-morrow more clearly, but he could not think of half a century hence. It was the same kind of limitation to his mind which made him as Viceroy keep up so little state and show. Calcutta declared that it was parsimony,—Sir John being in gifts one of the most liberal of mankind,—but it was really an inability to recognise the uses of "representation". Ceremonial was unreal, consequently he would have no ceremonial, forgetting that scenic effect, though made up of paint and canvas and limelight, has its place in the world as well as in the theatre. His views on education and on the relation of Government to the creeds of the peninsula were all of the missionary kind—very good in their way, very clear, and very easily carried out, but narrower than beseemed the ruler of so many races in so many stages of civilisation. Sir John Lawrence was in fact a middle-class ruler, a workman in politics rather than a thinker, an administrator rather than a politician, a man who had every faculty except those which are essential to the founder. There probably never was a better soldier, or a man who more thoroughly understood how to raise mercenary armies; but he quits India without having rendered it less necessary to use white troops to watch dark troops, or more possible to allow the native army breech-loading rifles. No man perhaps ever used his strength more efficiently or better deserved a peerage, but in none have the limits of that strength been so clearly revealed. He is a Nasmyth hammer which can chip an egg or flatten an iron bar, but only within its groove.

## THE USES OF SCOTCH LIBERALISM.

(*From "The Economist," 17th April*, 1869.)

It was no mere compliment which the Lord Advocate paid to his countrymen when he said on Saturday, at St. James's Hall, that the infusion of the Scotch element into English political life was very serviceable to the Empire. Nothing can be more true, and it is most true when for the Empire itself we substitute the Liberal party of the Empire. That party in England, with some great merits, among which is moderation, has also some remarkable defects. It is apt to hold its creed in a limp, flaccid, nerveless way, which suggests that it has either never thought it out, or is afraid of the conclusions to which hard thinking would lead to—turns aside from obstacles which one step forward would bring down as if they were immovable. It cannot bear to be logical or decisive, and allows all sorts of objections, which it knows to be nonsensical, to impede, or, in many cases—as for example Army Reform—prevent its own advance. Even its creed itself it not clear as a creed should be,—is rather a kind of general impression based on traditions, prejudices, speeches, party feelings, and reverence for certain well-known leaders. English Liberalism is very rarely indeed prepared to say that such and such an abuse is bad, because opposed to such and such a Liberal principle, though when its leaders have told it that the abuse must be removed it will follow them very readily. The protracted existence of the Irish Church after it had been condemned by every man who knew what Liberalism was, is a case in point, and the same spirit is displayed in almost every department of ecclesiastical legislation. The party passes a Divorce Bill, for example, allowing remarriage, but allows the clergy to say that they will be no parties to

carrying out the law; condemns Church rates, but allows them to remain legal as long as they are not collected by force; and while firmly convinced that every man ought to be compelled to teach his child, declines altogether to compel him. It denounces primogeniture, but lets Mr. Locke King's Bill slide, and is inclined to regard the Bill for legalising marriage with a deceased wife's sister as a right but insignificant measure which may as well be defeated as not. On the other hand, a few watch-words are retained, long after their meaning has been lost, and the party is quite startled to hear a Liberal resist a Press Bill, though only intended to legalise slander, or advocate limitations on the right of holding public meetings in crowded thoroughfares. It does not, in fact, try things by definite tests and then act on the result, but tolerates everything till it becomes too inconvenient to be borne any longer.

The Scotch Liberal, on the other hand, is essentially a rationalist, a man who looks directly from cause to effect, who reasons out his principles in his own mind, and once satisfied applies them unflinchingly. The *perfervida vis* of Scotchmen is really to a great extent what the French call having "the courage of their opinions," and is the precise quality English Liberals are apt to want. It is right, say Scotchmen and Englishmen equally, to vote for a member independently, but only the Scotchman does it. The Englishman is as fearless perhaps, but the logic of the situation does not take such hold on him: he is not so impressed with the *necessity* of the action following the thought as the Scotchman is—is disposed to temporise and wait for a better opportunity. The English farmer is very wroth very often about ground game, but the Scotch farmer in the same mood insists that ground game shall go, keeps on insisting till he forces his members to adopt a Bill which is called a compromise but which will extinguish ground game. If the Scotch believed, as it happens from religious ideas they do not, that marriage with the deceased wife's relatives was right, they would remove the restriction as illiberal even if no individual ever had been or would be aggrieved. In fact they act in politics as strong men act in

the ordinary business of life, trust their own principles and apply them undoubtingly, so undoubtingly as to be called enthusiasts very often, when they are not enthusiastic at all. The English difficulties in dealing with criminals would, if Englishmen were Scotch, scarcely exist. They would make up their minds as to the policy to be pursued, and would pursue it steadily till violent crime had perceptibly diminished. In the same way a Scotch mob is exceedingly dangerous, because it will not rise till it knows what it wants. and will then go straight forward to that even if the path lies over human lives The infusion of this spirit, which may be described as sternness, but is really the result of a stronger habitual relation between thought and action, is precisely what English Liberalism wants to give it bone, and we wish that a larger infusion of it were possible—that Scotch members would take a more prominent share than they do in English business, would strive for more decided influence and weight in the House, would let their true views be more clearly manifested. They reason while the English are often only feeling, and the reason, if expressed, would often make of the feeling a more active and determined force. They would correct, too, those momentary fluctuations of opinion to which we are so liable here, but which in Scotland have scarcely any perceptible force, as witness the total failure of the No-Popery cry. Scotchmen dread Rome, but they had made up their minds that a Free Church could resist Rome better than an established one—and the cry fell dead.

## QUIET REASONS FOR QUIET PEERS.

*(From "The Economist," 12th June, 1869.)*

THE present crisis in the House of Lords is in one respect without a precedent. (Passing of the Irish Church Bill.) During the last thirty years they have many times been compelled to pass Bills which they would rather not have passed. But in each case they yielded to some one peer who then predominated, first to the Duke of Wellington, and then to Lord Lyndhurst. The repeal of the Corn Laws was mainly carried without a struggle in the House of Lords because the Duke of Wellington said it must be carried. Sir Erskine May—one of the most calm critics of our present politics—says that it is one of the principal defects of the House of Lords as now constituted that it is apt to yield so extreme a deference to single leaders. But be this as it may, no such deference to any single peer now exists. Lord Derby last year abandoned it, and Lord Cairns has not this year acquired it. Lord Derby, it is true, on this occasion has returned to some of his activity, but he has not retaken all his old ascendancy. A great influence such as that cannot be laid down and reassumed at will. Many thoughtful peers now say: "We had confidence in Lord Derby's judgment while he was the responsible leader of a great party, but now we are not so sure. He tells us that in no event will he take office; that in no event can he take office. Amateur statesmen are always dangerous advisers, and Lord Derby is now an amateur statesman." Many quiet peers who, thinking it best, have till now always acted as their leader said, have now to act on their own judgment, and unless we mistake the subject altogether the following considerations should decide them.

First. As we last week showed at length, the rejection of

the Bill by the Lords will not prevent its passing immediately —within a few months or weeks. The very same Bill will be returned to the Lords, and then in one way or another it will be passed. Some speakers at public meetings have said that it was the duty of the House of Lords to disregard the momentary passion of the people. But there is no passion in the present case as yet. The verdict of the nation was given so calmly that another class of orators say that the nation "does not care". But it will care about a month or so hence if the Bill is rejected. The issue then will be—shall two or three hundred peers do as *they* like, or by far the greater part of the nation do as *it* likes? No one can doubt what the decision of large meetings in great cities will be upon such a question. They will be asked, "Will you have your way, or shall a few noblemen have theirs?" They would march to London (according to the old saying) to have their own way.

Secondly. As it now appears, the Bill cannot be rejected by a very large majority. The better probability is that the majority will be very small. The decision lies with so many peers, of whom so little is known, and who have so rarely acted for themselves, that we do not profess to be able to compute numbers. Still some say, some Conservatives say, the majority is to be only ten; and suppose it were twice or three times—granted it were twenty or thirty—how absurd would the result be. The country would be asked to yield not to the overwhelming majority of the Lords, but to an inconsiderable fraction of that House. A popular orator would say, "On a single bench in this vast meeting, there are as many people as this whole majority, and would this meeting by itself consent to be ruled by the persons on a single bench? And if this meeting could not be ruled, how should the country be so ruled?" To suppose that twenty or thirty noblemen can rule the English nation would be ridiculous, and above all things an aristocracy must not be ridiculous. Indeed it will not long be so; by its inherent sensibility it will give in. And therefore now that the only practical alternatives are the second reading of the Bill and

its rejection by a small majority, we cannot imagine that it will be in fact rejected.

Thirdly. What many conscientious peers think most material—if the House of Lords once rejects the Bill it can never alter it hereafter. When the country is once agitated, when the Bill is a second time presented, their power is gone. The old cry, "The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill"—such is the nature of appeals to the people. You must put a great issue to them as it stands. You cannot specially plead upon it or divide it. When they decide it they decide it as a whole. No practical politician can doubt that if the Irish Church Bill is rejected in June, the same Bill will be again before the Lords in August or October, or before the year is out, and that then the nation will not have it tampered with. They will say it is "*our* Bill and we *will* have it". But at present the Lords have great power of alteration. The Bill contains a thousand details, and each one of these may be changed. Granting that the Irish Church be disestablished and be disendowed, the mode of both and the degree of the latter may be discussed. If the Lords throw on the Ministry the burden and the responsibility of agreeing or rejecting alterations of this clause and that clause, the task of those leaders will be painful and heavy, for they will be anxious for peace' sake to concede much, and indeed anxious from selfish motives too, since they cannot rely on the national support on details which the nation does not know or heed, and because there is a taste for compromise in England that is most apt to upset any Ministry which asks for "all or nothing". To reject this Bill is to ensure its passing as it is, and to prevent its being changed as its rejectors would prefer.

Fourthly. By such a rejection questions must be raised as to the House of Lords, which it is easy to ask and hard to answer. On paper a philosopher may prove that hereditary rank is a good thing (and we quite think it has been so in England, and is still); but at a big meeting it is not easy to prove the proposition to a number of people without rank. The contrary arguments are very plain. Why should a person

who has done nothing to deserve eminence, who has only "taken the trouble to be born," whose ancestors may or may not have been meritorious, but who does not even *say* that he is himself meritorious, who is only the heir of an heir, the "tenth transmitter of a foolish face";—why should such a person (and in matter of fact such persons *are* the mass of every aristocracy) be selected, not only for honour, but for responsibility, for the discharge of duties affecting millions, and requiring for their good discharge real ability? If the question comes to be ever plainly and practically discussed, you will never convince any nation that it ought to establish an aristocracy. The merits of it are so hidden, and the objections so very strong and plain, that the mass-vote of mankind must always be against it. An hereditary legislature exists because it exists and is accepted; but it will perish if the common mass of men are set to inquire into it, to discuss it, and vote on it as they themselves wish. The prestige of a privileged order is like the credit of a bank: if you do but discuss whether a bank is bad or good the bank will stop, and so of an aristocracy: if you have to prove that it *ought* to be obeyed, it will not be obeyed.

Lastly. This rejection will throw the present power and the management of this controversy into the very last hands in which the rejectors could wish to see it. There are "no moderate people" it is said "in a revolution," and though the rejection will not bring on a revolution, it will cause a great crisis in which loud voices only can be heard, and where all half-and-half opinions will come to an end. In a word, if the quiet peers, with whom the power is, want to help Mr. Bright, they will reject the Bill, for then his words will again move multitudes and his genius be supreme, for it is a genius that suits a storm, and he will have the power to settle what shall happen. But now the quiet peers have much power themselves, and we cannot think they will be so infatuated as to transfer it to their oldest, their strongest, and most dangerous opponents.

## THE SUFFRAGE FOR WOMEN.

(*From "The Economist," 7th May*, 1870.)

SOMEWHAT unexpectedly Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill to abolish the electoral disabilities of women—that is, to permit women who are rated to vote at Parliamentary elections as well as men—has passed a second reading. After the divisions on the question when the Reform of 1867 was under discussion, so early a reversal of the decision then come to is at first sight unaccountable. It is impossible to say that the division was a surprise. There was fair warning beforehand, a full debate, and a good attendance of members to take part in the division. The discussion showed, moreover, that there is really a strong opinion in favour of the measure, while no party is strenuously opposed to it. We suspect that a good deal of feeling on both sides is lukewarm, members voting for the Bill as for a curious experiment, which cannot do much harm and may be worth trying; but the lukewarmness of those who oppose it is most conspicuous. The vote is thus in all respects a real one. Even if the Bill should be checked at a later stage, we believe there is little doubt that a good stand will be made for it, so that it will at least become a practical Parliamentary question. The change of opinion which has opened up so good a prospect for woman suffrage is not difficult to account for, and the reasons urged for it are perhaps not easily answered.

In the *first* place, the question of woman suffrage has shared the benefit of that tendency in favour of change as change which sprang up with the passage of the Reform Bill, and has greatly increased since. It is no argument now against a measure or an amendment that it is new. The presumption rather is, even among many Conservatives, that there are defects in the old arrangements, and that new and old should be

discussed on their merits, which gives an obvious advantage to what is new. No doubt the notion of women having votes is a very considerable innovation ; it is contrary to recognised usages and habits in a more than ordinary degree ; as in all questions between the sexes, there is a difficulty in making them the subject of common reasoning at all—people taking for granted that the settled rule is the law of nature, and having a difficulty in conceiving any substantial change in the common relations of life. But the innovating tendency is now so strong as to have overcome this initial difficulty ; people are really willing to review the inveterate custom by which women have been kept from voting, as well as other customs which regulate their legal and social position.

*Second.*—The change proposed by the Bill, though it cannot but be a precedent for a general measure of female suffrage, is supported by special arguments which are most difficult to oppose. The Bill, it is said, for instance, only gives votes to women who have property, who have an independent life and share the burdens of other taxpayers. It follows the constitutional maxim of giving Parliamentary representation to those who are taxed. This is really very strong ground, and places at a disadvantage the general objection to women taking part in political contests. If it is answered that the constitutional rule is very general—that there are many owners of property, such as minors and lunatics, who are taxed without representation—that hundreds and thousands of adult taxpayers are excluded by reason of unfulfilled conditions as to residence and the like—that the representation of the community may be considered complete, notwithstanding many such exclusions—then the rejoinder may at once be made that the exclusion of women is really of a different character from any of these. It applies to individuals who are not alleged to be disqualified for the other affairs of life, and it applies to them permanently, although they are forced to bear equally with those who do vote all the burdens of the State. Ratepayers who happen to be women cannot qualify, but all other ratepayers, who are considered competent to manage their own affairs, may do so. The ex-

clusion is certainly repugnant to our constitutional theory. Abstractly of course there is no reason why the good of the State should not be the object of those who have the power of constituting the electoral body—that is, the electors for the time being; but when it is once laid down to be generally expedient for taxpayers or ratepayers to vote, the sense of justice is shocked by departing from the rule for totally independent reasons. We ask immediately—what is the supreme necessity for excluding specially those who would otherwise be eligible? If direct harm is not to be done by admitting them—harm which the entire community can plainly and at once perceive—it is difficult to justify the exclusion on general grounds of policy, and because of dangers which are remote and indirect.

Another special argument of no little force is the fact that women already vote in municipal and parochial elections, and are otherwise entitled to share in the business of local government. Where taxation is closely connected with property, and women are the largest contributors, it would indeed be difficult to exclude them—to establish the principle that one set of people is to pay taxes and another to spend them. But local matters are so important that if the assistance of women has no visibly injurious effect it would be difficult to believe in the evils of their assistance in affairs of State. It is, at any rate, for objectors to show the distinction between local and imperial matters, which permits women to manage the former and forbids them to help in the latter.

While these are the arguments for the Bill, the objections are plainly untenable. The wisdom of the policy of excluding women in general from politics, even if it could be demonstrated, could hardly be urged against a measure which does not violate the general policy. We are asked to deal with exceptional women, at any rate with a minority, who, unlike the majority of their sex, fulfil exactly as men every obligation of citizenship, and who again, unlike the majority, are in no way virtually represented. The claim of married women to have votes may be stronger than that of those who are to be enfranchised by the Bill, but the same

grounds cannot be urged for it. It is certainly hard measure, for the sake of others who are in a different position, to deny any class of individuals a privilege of quasi-right which they may value. Then it is said that women of the class to whom the Bill applies do not, as a rule, care for votes. We see no sufficient evidence for this, no evidence certainly that there is not a large number who would care; but if it were true, the opinion of the class has little to do with it. It is a question mainly of individual privilege, and we should obviously be careful how we permit some taxpayers not only to forego their own privileges, but those also of their neighbours. Last of all, it is urged that female influence will be retrograde—that the constituencies will be more Conservative when single women who are ratepayers have votes. But this is not a good working objection, though it may weigh with some of the Liberal party. If Conservatives take this view they will undoubtedly support the measure. What people wish besides is a fair representation according to the general principles accepted, and the higher expediency of combining representation with taxpaying can hardly fail to outweigh even with Liberals the lower expediency of passing favourite measures.

There is thus a good deal to be said for the Bill which has passed a second reading. It removes an anomaly in our electoral system, and will admit some taxpayers to vote who care much for the privilege, though perhaps a good many more who care very little. The balance of probabilities is that it will do some good. We shall gain by the addition to the number of active voters; opinion *pro tanto* will be somewhat better represented; perhaps a wholly fresh element will be infused into political life. And so long as the measure is confined to the present limits, the addition to the mass of indifferent and corrupt voters, which is the only apparent danger, is not likely to be great. Nor is it any reason against the measure that the precedent may lead to a more general suffrage for women. If it does it will only be because the experience is favourable—because a good undeniable reason has been furnished on the side of change.

## ARE ALSACE AND LORRAINE WORTH MOST TO GERMANY OR FRANCE?

(*From "The Economist," 24th September*, 1870.)

THE argument that the inhabitants of Alsace and of a certain portion of Lorraine, though admitted on all hands to be thoroughly French at heart, are by blood and by speech more German than French, is usually supposed to tell in favour of the German demand for their annexation. Perhaps it does so just so far as this, that it to some extent diminishes the difficulty which might be experienced and the length of time which might be needed for re-Germanising them, for restoring them to content and the feeling of self-respect as constituent parts of the German nation. Just so there are portions of the Austrian Tyrol, as heartily attached as any parts of the Tyrol to the Austrian rule, where Italian is the only language spoken, and though that is no argument for transferring these parts to Italy, it probably would require less length of time to assimilate these portions to Italian rule than it would to assimilate, for instance, the upper valley of the Adige where German only is understood. There can be no doubt at all events that it would take much less time to reconcile the recently annexed part of Savoy to French rule than to assimilate Nice, because in the former the language in use is entirely French, and the people therefore understand the literature of their adopted country and the laws and orders of their administrative chiefs, while in the latter the literature and the laws are the literature and the laws of foreigners. The case is not indeed so favourable in the greater part of Alsace, for the dialect of the Vosges, the language actually in use by the country people of the department, is unintelligible to most Germans; and newspapers written in pure German would be

orally unintelligible to illiterate inhabitants. But conceding that so far as the affinity of blood and the similarity of forms of speech go, there would be some attenuation of the difficulty of re-Germanising these Alsatians and Lorrainers, the further question remains to be asked—whether the process, if it can be accomplished, would be a gain or a loss, in moral resources, to the world at large ;—whether it would enrich Germany more or less than it would impoverish France ?

Now, we think it would be easy to show that France has owed a vast deal of her influence in Europe to her wonderful power of reconciling and mingling genius and races of the most dissimilar elements in one great national whole, and so enlarging the resources of character on which the nation has to depend. Nothing can well be more distinct than the Gascon, the Provençal, the Parisian, the Norman, and the Breton. Yet all these widely different races, and not only these, but the Italians of Corsica and the French Swiss, have lent France great men—great men, who have at times influenced profoundly the destinies of the country. The Girondists, for instance, who so materially influenced the fortunes of the revolution, were a party bound together as much by local and provincial feeling, as by mere community of principle,—in fact, the peculiar shade of their political principles arose out of the character of the race from whom they came ; and so, again, the peculiar temperament and faith of Brittany have constantly exerted the deepest influence on French history. Look only at the men who represented the various phases in the French Revolution, and consider how widely distinct were the genealogical and moral elements they contributed. Voltaire was a thorough Frenchman, from the neighbourhood of Paris, and of the Parisian type ; Diderot, a Burgundian ; Rousseau, a Swiss ; Mirabeau, a Provençal of Florentine extraction ; Vergniaud, a North Gascon ; Danton, from the North of France ; Barère, a South Gascon ; and Napoleon, a Corsican. Here was a succession of totally different elements which in turn became predominant over either the mind or the body, or both mind and body, of France. And a long list could easily be made of the great names of French litera-

ture, showing an equally wide variety of genius and race. Unquestionably it has been one of the first causes of the vast influence of France in Europe that she has covered so great a variety of races and provincial characters and yet managed to unite them all in ties of indissoluble strength. Norman masterliness, and Breton veneration and romance, and Parisian keenness of wit, and Gascon elasticity, and Provençal sentiment and gaiety, are elements as widely different from each other as it is easy to conceive bound up in a union so strong as that of the French nation. But in all these there is wanting one of the most important of all contributions to the elements of a great nation—the German fidelity, domesticity, and thoroughness of character, and these are more or less exhibited in those Eastern provinces of German extraction which Germany now covets, and proposes to reclaim.

Now we do not hesitate to say that as a general rule a nation gains more, man for man, by those districts of its country which supplement the weakness of its typical character than by those which are most characteristic and typical, —so long as the former belong to it *willingly*, and really yield to it their characteristic genius and life. France needs German elements, so long as they embrace French rule gladly, more probably than she needs any other elements of the national life. To her the quasi-German stock of Alsace and Lorraine is invaluable, while to Germany it would only add what Germany has already in superabundance. And let it not be said that this argument is directly opposed to the political tendencies of the day, which aggregate like to like, and break up empires of heterogeneous provinces held together by sheer force, like the Empire of Austria for instance before 1859. We quite admit and even maintain that it is absolutely needful for the development of any healthy national life that the union between the distinct and mutually-supplementing elements of which we have spoken should be not compulsory, but perfectly cordial and willing. Only when that is so,—and no one denies that it is so in France in relation to Alsace and Lorraine,—we assert that the wider the range of distinct temperaments and stocks over which the rule of a nation extends the better it is

for that nation. What does Great Britain not gain by the hearty co-operation of Scotch and English, and the totally different genius even of the Northern and the Southern English, in one and the same national unity? What might we not gain if we could ever bring Ireland into a union and co-operation as hearty? Now something like what Scotland gives to England, the Eastern and quasi-German provinces of France seem to us to give to France so long as they remain with her, and we believe that their separation would be an infinitely greater loss to the prospects of the French character and genius than they could possibly be a gain to Germany. The German qualities of character are those in which the French are peculiarly deficient. The plodding tenacity, the unambitious faithfulness of the German mind and character, are precisely the kind of qualities which France can borrow from the Eastern far better than from any other side of her Empire. France has everything to lose, and Germany, in a moral and intellectual point of view, little to gain from these so-called "rectifications" of boundary. Germany would have a perfect right to reclaim any German province of France which was discontented with the French yoke. But we not only deny that that right extends to German provinces of France which are heartily French, but we hold that it applies even less to such provinces than to provinces which are purely French in race and language, so long as these last are not more vehemently opposed to annexation than the Gallicised German provinces. The annexation of purely French provinces to Germany might indeed open a prospect of somewhat slower assimilation, but the assimilation once accomplished would probably be a real and great addition to the intellectual and moral wealth of Germany,—an addition by which Germany would be a great gainer. But in annexing German Lorraine and Alsace she would annex provinces with no strikingly new element of blood and character wherewith to enrich Germany, while she would take from France some of the best possible correctives of French deficiencies. With very little difference in the price to be paid,—the price of alien and oppressive government for two or three generations,—she would gain

nothing but *population* by annexing provinces of German stock which have lost all their loyalty to Germany and are full of loyalty to France; whereas she would gain both population and moral elements of character and genius by annexing provinces purely French.

We are well aware that this argument is not one which will appear of the least weight either to the military leaders of Germany who are thinking and talking of nothing but the strength of the military frontier, or to the German pamphleteers who are raving about the redemption of provinces stolen hundreds of years ago from the "Fatherland". But it is a consideration which should have some little weight with Englishmen who are considering impartially what the true limits of the new doctrine of nationalities ought to be; and for our own parts, we believe it is one of infinitely greater importance than the very trivial military considerations which at present absorb so much more than their fair share of attention. That North and South Germany, with a population already exceeding 40,000,000,—and that a rapidly increasing population,—and an outlying German population of some 20,000,000 more, which no doubt they are looking forward to absorbing soon into their mighty national life, and with an army the best organised, the most numerous, and the most successful which the world has ever known, should pretend to be seriously afraid of what a defeated and disorganised France, with a stationary population of only 37,000,000, and no prospect of extension in any direction, can do in the way of invasion, seems to us, we confess, pure affectation. Alsace and Lorraine are worth infinitely more in a moral point of view to France than they can be in a military point of view to Germany.

## MR. BRIGHT'S RETIREMENT.

(*From "The Economist," 24th December*, 1870.)

THE retirement of Mr. Bright from the Cabinet, owing to failing health, will give all the older readers of *The Economist* a peculiar feeling of sadness. A new generation is attaining life and vigour to whom the "Anti-Corn Law League" is a matter of history. If you chance to speak of it as "*the* League," as we always used to speak of it, they ask "*what* League?" But the great majority of active men still remember the details of that great agitation, the triumphs of "Drury Lane and Covent Garden" meetings, and how Mr. Bright's voice rung full and penetrating, second in power only to one, if second to any, over those great open stages. That Mr. Bright has to abandon active administration will come home to many as an unwelcome hint that it is time for them to give up themselves.

If, as has been said, "it is a proud thing to have millions of opponents and *no* enemy," Mr. Bright has a full right to be proud. Persons at a distance who disapprove of his principles, and who only think of him as an incarnation of them, undoubtedly hate him with a strong political hatred; but no one brought close to him does so. There is an evident sincerity and bluff *bona fides* about him, which goes straight to the hearts of Englishmen. We have been often amused to see how much, in the depths of Tory districts where "John Bright" was bitterly execrated, the regular residents were puzzled because their own M.P.'s and the most conservative people who went to London always mentioned him with geniality and toleration, and if young, would say, in the modern dialect—"Well, after all, he is a great *institution*".

Perhaps great orators, more than any other men, are liable

to be utterly misconceived. Their power—more penetrative at the moment than any literature—brings home to thousands and thousands *some* notion, but it can never be a true notion. An orator works under severe conditions. He can only express the sort of thoughts an audience will hear, and the sort of feelings they will apprehend; and every orator of finer nature has much sentiment which is too subtle for the multitude, and many conclusions which will not suit public meetings. There are many things, too, which can only be said in a still, small voice, and not in the stentorian tones which alone public meetings can take in. No audience, still less any distant hearer of a speech, gives an orator credit for that which he has to leave out in order to speak effectually. They fancy that there is nothing in him but the sort of things which he says, especially if he is continually saying them; but an orator of finer genius feels much which he never says, much which under the inevitable conditions of his art he could not say. It is the pursuing penalty of every great orator that he is, in a sense, *mis*known everywhere, for he is compelled to diffuse among mankind a picture of himself drawn in a deceiving light, with some traits aggravated, with other traits diminished—like him of course in many respects, yet to those who have real knowledge, in nearly as many utterly unreal and unlike.

Mr. Bright has had his full share of such misconceptions. In the agricultural districts he is even yet looked upon as an excessively pacific person, who cared little for the honour of England, and who would sacrifice that or anything else for peace at any price; but as Lord Granville said—"There are not many persons who have more of the popular *John Bull* character" than Mr. Bright, and among the many ingredients of that character, a certain pugnacity is not the one for which he is the least remarkable.

Again, Mr. Bright is often imagined to be a wild incendiary, who would be glad to pull down every present institution, and who would not much care to inquire with what substitutes these institutions were to be replaced. But in the present Cabinet, unless consistent rumour speaks false, his voice has more usually been a Conservative voice than the contrary.

And, in fact, though Mr. Bright has wanted much to change many things, and still may want to change them, he is much too characteristic an Englishman to like change for change's sake, or not to have a full share of the Conservative instinct which if possible clings to the "tried," and will not without plain and clear reason consent to migrate to the unknown and inexperienced.

If Mr. Bright has been somewhat misconceived in his own time, he will probably have the compensation of being—we may risk a prophecy—of all our own contemporary politicians the best known to posterity. His speeches are very amusing reading, and, as a rule, those are best known to posterity who can amuse posterity. Nothing can in general be more fleeting than the fame of an orator. A great Budget speech is heard with the most eager attention, and criticised at the time with vehement interest. But who cares for it a few years afterwards? Who but a very few economical inquirers has the slightest remembrance of the financial speeches of Pitt or Peel? But there is a certain mixture of racy fun and sentiment in Bright's speeches which make them capital reading even now—reading which you can read when you are tired, but which yet has something in it; and this is the sort of literature which travels farthest and lives longest.

We are not now reviewing Mr. Bright's career. It is not yet closed. Though we trust he will never again attempt administrative labours, we hope that his powerful tones may often be heard again in the great assemblages of his countrymen. If we had to sketch his life, there would be something to blame as well as much to praise. But we need not go into that now. We have only to express our regret at his retirement, and to wonder at the strange dispensations of Providence, which mixed a fine, and to some extent incapacitating, thread of nervous delicacy in a mind so healthy, so vigorous, and on most points so emphatically robust.

## MARSHAL PRIM.

(*From "The Economist," 7th January*, 1871.)

THE want of interest felt by the general public of Europe in the details of the assassination of Marshal Prim is a very remarkable, and, as far as we know, an unprecedented fact. His death was of course telegraphed all over Europe, and was regarded in some ways as an event of the first importance; but there was little or no curiosity to learn the details of the catastrophe,—none of those long telegrams, full of nothing, which would have followed any other crime of the same kind, and extraordinarily little sympathy expressed, except for King Amadeus who had not been shot. Europe apparently cared only about the results of the event, and but little about the event itself—a sure proof that it was but little interested in the personality of the sufferer. And Europe, as is usually the case, was right, for apart from his position, there was very little to interest mankind in Marshal Prim. That position was without doubt exceptional. Marshal Prim was probably the only perfect example of the Interrex, of the King who is not King and never means to be King, ever seen in the modern world. He ruled a very great country with an unbroken success as Dictator for two years, and yet he never regarded himself as one of the possible candidates for the permanent Sovereignty. For two years there has practically been in Spain no law but Marshal Prim's will; throughout that period he has objected to any *régime* except the Royal, and yet it seems clear that he had no intention of putting the Crown upon his own head, that he honestly regarded himself as a mere Dictator *ad interim*, bound to carry out a specific change in the destinies of his country. That is a strange

position, and it is not rendered less strange by the entire absence of genius in the man who occupied it. We desire to speak kindly of Marshal Prim, for his murder was a disgrace to the party which either organised or allowed it; but it is probable that no man so entirely an ordinary man, no man so completely without a following created by himself, ever occupied so lofty a position. It is of course difficult, if not impossible, thoroughly to estimate a man whose secret history has yet to be written; but Marshal Prim appears to us to have been merely a good officer, a trustworthy General of Division, distinguished from other good officers mainly by this —an exact and somewhat unusual comprehension of his own capacities. His earlier life was passed as an officer believed to be of ability, who shifted from party to party as a new party rose to power, but who was so little of a partisan that in shifting he lost no respect, and none of the military confidence of his subordinates. In the short and not very important war between Spain and Morocco he behaved remarkably well, finding, during a momentary confusion, an opportunity for the display of his most exceptional faculty—one, however, which he shares with many soldiers—bravery of the kind which increases as the danger grows more imminent. Mankind in general, not being brave, values bravery very highly; and there is no doubt Marshal Prim possessed the quality in its supreme degree,—the degree in which it is exceptional—that he was brave to the point at which a man is more of a great man in extreme danger than he is when quietly seated in a room. In the intrigues which followed this war Prim displayed no especial quality, except that of commanding the confidence of soldiers; nor in the Revolution or in the Interregnum, was he ever more than the good General of Division; but then he was the good General of Division, and not the indifferent one. Having driven out his mistress—whom he hated as, on the whole, a discreditable Head for the Spanish Army—his idea was to maintain military order until a new Sovereign or Commander-in-Chief could be discovered, and he never interested himself much about any other point. No Revolutionary Government was ever quite so wanting in originality. General

Serrano and Admiral Topete had assisted him, so General Serrano and Admiral Topete were to have great offices—any offices, in fact, they liked, provided they left the Army in the hands of Prim. Civil appointments were given pretty much as it happened. Foreign affairs took their chance, except in so far as they involved military considerations, in which case the Marshal took them into his own hands. As for internal Government he regarded it as most officers regard internal Government. A King was usual and necessary, so he sought for a King. Cortes were usual, so Cortes were elected. Freedom was popular, so, as far as was consistent with the Marshal's notions of order, freedom was allowed. As we understand, he never interfered much with any manifestation of opinion until opposition showed itself in the form he understood—in insurrection in the streets of some city, and then he put it down, with shot and steel if he could, if not, with shell, differing from other officers only in this—that he would go any length, would actually batter down any city of Spain rather than not secure the victory. As he was a really good officer, thoroughly trained and full of experience, and opposed to untrained men, he always succeeded; and when he had succeeded, he went quietly on again without any additional bitterness. The true grievances of Spain seem never to have struck him. The true wants of Spain never particularly moved him. There was to be order till the historic system was rebuilt, and at any sacrifice he obtained the order he recommended. He did not originate anything, or make any experiments, or engage in any desperate intrigues, but just went on as a good general officer would, intent on his idea of maintaining the tranquillity of his district. That he succeeded is due to the fact that he *was* a good officer, that he could secure ordinary military obedience, and that, this secured, his force was adequate to its work.

There are but two original points in Marshal Prim which lift him out of the ruck of continental second-rate generals. The first was a certain indifference to anything out of the range of his ideas, which enabled him to leave a good deal of power to men whom most military Dictators would have in-

terfered with, such as his civilian colleagues ; and the second, as we have said, was a clear idea of the ultimate limit of his own pretensions. He was competent to be a chief administrator under a King, but he was not competent to be King himself. Most men in his position would have sought the Crown, but he did not ; on the contrary, he, being a Spanish officer at heart, most probably thought himself unworthy of it. It is clear from his ultimate action that the rather ridiculous speech, in which he described his resistance to his wife's importunities urging him to be King, was only overfrank, that his efforts to find a Sovereign were genuine enough, that he really thought he could *make* a King, and ought to make one out of the right wood, and in the regular well-understood way. He was vastly ambitious, but his ambition was only to be supreme under the King—the regular ambition of every Englishman, modified by the history of the country, by the fact that in Spain the road to power lies through revolutions, and not through Parliamentary votes.

The third and last peculiarity of Prim's mind was in one way a special, in another a very common, one. Such of our readers as have come in contact with soldiers or sailors of experience have probably noticed their remarkable proclivity to a kind of political speculation wholly apart from their usual lines of thought. The grim Admiral, whom nobody may oppress, is often an outrageous Tory ; the steady General, full of the ideas of the service, is often an earnest Radical. Neither would bear genuine ultra-Toryism or full-grown Radicalism, but the speculative side of their minds tends towards absolute conclusions on one side or the other. Prim was a man of that kind. He laboured to rebuild the Throne, but he earnestly thought and openly said that some day or other the Throne would be condemned as surplusage ; that Republicanism was the creed of the future ; that some day or other, "when there were Republicans in Spain," the Republic would be established there. His belief was quite honest, though it had, except as a speculative theory, next to no meaning, and its expression gave rise to a vague idea spread throughout Europe, that Marshal Prim had ideas which might bear fruit,

that he was not quite understood, that he might yet take a course very much at variance with anything expected of him. That belief gave a certain piquancy and impression of uncertainty to his actions; but he had all the while no ideas of the kind, no more intention of establishing a Republic than Sir De Lacy Evans, who in theory was heartily on that side, but in practice would have fought for Her Majesty like a zealot. Marshal Prim accepted the Republic for a century or two hence, and meanwhile intended Monarchy; and the contrast between his belief and his single speculative doubt probably produced the disappointment and eagerness for revenge which led to his lamentable end. The Republicans thought of him as a Statesman who had cheated them, whereas he was only a very good officer, who thought that at present things should go on as usual, but fancied that some hundreds of years hence it might be possible and advisable to do without a King.

## THE "QUARTERLY REVIEW" ON THE LESSONS OF THE WAR.

(*From "The Economist," 28th January*, 1871.)

THE *Quarterly Review*, in an article of considerable force, though not, perhaps, of any great width of view, on the political lessons of the war,—an article attributed by rumour to a distinguished Member of the Opposition in the House of Lords, —comments with something like bitterness on the vacillations of the popular mind in relation to our national defences, declaring it to be "the fault of our English system, that, with a dynasty absolutely secure, it artificially imitates the vices of a throne mined by revolution and conscious of hourly danger". The Reviewer shows that it was the instability of the French Executive, the necessity for looking to the most opposite points of the political compass for aid, for fomenting the love of glory on the one hand, for respecting the hatred of a conscription on the other—the necessity for conciliating the army, which, as was supposed at least, could only be done by relaxing its discipline, on the one hand, and the equally strong necessity for strengthening it, which could only be done by improving its discipline to the utmost on the other hand,—which led to the frightful collapse of the French military system. The Emperor had yielded to the Corps Legislatif here, and to the peasantry there. He had made things comfortable for the army, and he had made the army comfortable to the country; and the net result was that first the army failed him disgracefully, and then the country. After pointing this out with a good deal of brilliancy, and pointing out also how the stability of the Prussian throne, which enabled the Hohenzollerns to set public opinion on the same subject at defiance, had given Prussia the fruits of a uniform and coherent military policy of a long series

of years, never modified in deference to any popular pressure, the Reviewer goes on to assert that England, so far at least as our military policy is concerned, stands in precisely the position, not of Prussia, but of France. The administration of the War Office is always changing. Every Minister, in succession, has his own crotchets as to what will ensure efficiency ; and every Cabinet, in turn, is subjected to a Parliamentary pressure of variable direction and equally variable intensity. Except in times of spasmodic alarm, reductions of expenditure are always popular ; and times of spasmodic alarm come at intervals far too rare, and are continued for a period far too short, to mend the matter, if they do not absolutely make it worse. Hence the *Quarterly* Reviewer finds that the method of our military policy is far more like the incoherence of France than the steady coherence of Prussia, and predicts for us, whenever tried, a collapse of the same fatal kind. Our political machinery, he says, "unrivalled as an instrument of enfeebling the arm of Government, and therefore hindering an excess of executive interference, has prevented the oppressions into which the zeal of continental bureaus constantly betrays them. It satisfies the most imperious want of a free people, which is to be let alone. It is not ineffective for purposes of mere destruction, especially when it is driven by the forces of sectarian animosity. But in matters where it is necessary that Government should govern and create, it lamentably breaks down. All the virtues that are attributed to it,—in many respects justly, for purposes of peace, make it helpless for purposes of war."

We do not, on the whole, dissent very materially from this criticism. The Reviewer may be slightly caricaturing the incoherence of public opinion when he describes "the decisions of the House of Commons upon the question who is to rule the country," as "something between a judgment and a scramble" ; but as regards military matters at least, this is not a bad description of what the policy of the House of Commons has been. Nor is it conceivable that while the military policy of the House of Commons is decided by "something between a judgment and a scramble," the successive War-Ministers are likely to save us from the results of our own flightiness of purpose.

Popular Government *means*, and as we suppose ought to mean, a Government which, for good and for evil, savours of all the good qualities and all the bad qualities of the people. It would not be well, but the reverse, if on subjects on which we are ignorant and careless, we were to be saved from the natural results of that ignorance and carelessness. The *Quarterly* Reviewer is perfectly right in saying that the English people and the English House of Commons have no steady military policy, and that as a consequence we are, and while it is so, always must be, unprepared for any great and sudden military effort.

But when the Reviewer assumes, as we think he does, that nothing can really remedy this mischief, except a change which will give us, in some form or other, a more permanent Executive, operating like the Presidential Government in the United States for instance, or the dynastic power of Princes like Hohenzollerns who refuse to surrender the army to the tender mercies of Parliaments, we cannot at all go with him. He seems to us to ignore the fact that military collapses happen as much to permanent Executives, which are not possessed with a special care and genius for military administration, as to changeable Executives. There is nothing to prove that the next, or next but one, President of the United States, will be much readier for a sudden war than was Mr. Buchanan. General Grant, who gained his Presidential chair by his success as a soldier, may be; but generals of genius and experience are not likely to be permanently resident at the White House. The military collapse of Austria in 1866 was not the collapse of an unstable Executive. The army of Austria had long been one of the great Imperial institutions, and yet it vanished before the Prussian arms even more quickly than the French army. The Russian military system had been most carefully matured and prepared by a ruler of real genius before the Crimean War in 1853; and yet it was found quite unequal to the strain put upon it by very indifferent armies under very feeble commanders. The instability of the Executive of a State is not by any means the sole cause of military incompetence. You may have a dynasty as com-

pletely masters of the situation as the Hohenzollerns, and as fond of dabbling in military matters, and yet as incompetent or as unsuccessful as Napoleon III. No doubt a variable mind in military affairs is a sure cause of failure; but a well-preserved tradition is not only not a sure cause of success, but may be—if the military tradition so preserved is not wise and well adapted to the exigencies of the people—as sure a cause of failure as variability of mind itself. The remedy for ignorance and incoherence of purpose is instruction. And we maintain that if you can but once get a people well instructed in what they want, there is *far* less danger of a feeble and ignorant policy on military matters, or any others, than there is from a dynastic tradition, however well preserved. When, therefore, the Reviewer proposes somewhat faintly, and as if he were half afraid of his own suggestion, that the military estimates might be voted for a term of years in order to escape the incoherence of popular feeling, we entirely object to his remedy. The people must learn what they really want, and must learn to understand the importance of keeping to a principle when once they have adopted it. The best way to teach them this is to turn their attention constantly to the subject. If, with an instructed people, and a House of Commons improved, as we may fairly hope that it will be improved when it comes to be chosen by an instructed people, we cannot ensure a certain amount of clear and constant purpose in military matters, as we can in domestic matters, we do not know any conceivable device by which such clearness and constancy of purpose can really be obtained. There was a time when the English people understood little or nothing about commercial and financial policy. We do not say but that that time may come again, if the children of the new electors are not speedily taught the elements of clear notions on these subjects. But at least for a considerable term of years we have had a House of Commons clearly knowing its own mind on this subject, and neither ignorant nor fickle. The same may be said of the general drift of our criminal legislation; and we do not at all see why the same should not be true of our Army and Navy system. There is at least far more

chance of getting a coherent system out of popular knowledge, than there is out of bureaucratic independence. Popular intelligence is not easily cultivated, but so far as it is attained it is a sure guarantee against both folly and fickleness. Bureaucratic independence is no guarantee at all against the former; and while you have no safety as to the bureaucratic successions, it is no considerable guarantee against the latter. The military estimates might be voted for six years, and the only result be that all would be misspent, while at the end of the six years the people would know far less about the matter than before, and the nation be more helpless. It seems to us idle to propose any remedy for the misgovernment of a self-governed people, except the better information of the governing body—that is, of the public itself.

## MR. GLADSTONE ON HOME RULE FOR IRELAND.

(*From "The Economist," 30th September*, 1871.)

THE Prime Minister's speech at Aberdeen cannot at any rate be charged with that tendency to intellectual hesitation and finesse which is the favourite taunt of his opponents. In speaking of the Irish cry for Home Rule, Mr. Gladstone drew no fine distinctions, and came to no ambiguous conclusion. He asked if the United Parliament was to be broken up because it could not or would not do justice to Ireland, or only to please the Irish fancy. If the former were alleged, the answer was that for the last three years the United Parliament has been eagerly engaged in doing for Ireland what it would hardly have done for either England or Scotland—no doubt because neither England nor Scotland stood in need of the measures granted as Ireland did,—but none the less did this sufficiently demonstrate the perfect willingness and capacity of the United Parliament to redress all real Irish grievances. If the latter were alleged, that the Irish do not *choose* to take even good government from the hands of a United Parliament, then the answer is that on that head the Irish have only the right to vote with the other members of the Union; the whole Union has a right to decide what is in this respect for the common benefit, and unless any party can allege that their individual interests are trampled on by the Union, the whole Union has a right to say whether union or separation will best promote the interests of all. And this in point of fact, as everybody knows, Great Britain has long ago decided. In Mr. Gladstone's own vigorous words—"can any sensible man, can any rational man, suppose that at this time of day, in this condition of the world, we are going to disintegrate the great capital institutions of this country for the purpose of

making ourselves ridiculous in the sight of all mankind, and crippling any power we possess for bestowing benefits through legislation on the country to which we belong?"

That is clear, forcible language, which may, we hope, have the effect of showing the Home Rule party in Ireland that while Ireland may gain almost anything that is reasonable and just from the Imperial Parliament, she will not gain the repeal of the Union for which that Party is now crying out, and which would be indeed in many respects far more mischievous to British interests, and perhaps even to Irish interests, than absolute independence.

Indeed it is hard to conceive anything more mischievous than the opening of an indefinite, and indefinitely increasable, number of debatable issues between Great Britain and Ireland such as would be not merely suggested but forced on the public by the division of duties between an Irish and British Parliament. It is difficult enough to divide the sphere of properly municipal or country from properly central and Parliamentary powers, and almost impossible to do so beneficially without giving Parliament an absolute overriding power in case of conflict. But this difficulty would not only be enhanced a thousand times by the great importance, unity, and national coherence of an Irish Parliament, but it would be quite impossible to give the Imperial (or as it would then be, Federal) Parliament a power to override the decisions of an Irish Parliament without provoking something like a rebellion on every separate occasion. It may be said perhaps that this difficulty has never been felt in the United States, where the State powers and the Federal powers are divided by a hard and fast line, which neither State nor Federation has the power to overleap. But in point of fact the difficulty has been felt, and felt very keenly, and though not for precisely the same reasons as it would be felt in this case, yet for a similar class of reasons—namely, because the genius and policy of a certain group of the States diverged very widely from the genius and policy of the remainder. The Secession war was in fact a State revolt against the Central power, and though that Secession was due not to race, but to a "domestic

institution" of a most potent and mischievous kind, yet difference of race and religion conjointly are certainly quite capable of producing as great a chasm of feeling between the different members of a Federation as is any difference in "domestic institutions". Only consider for a moment what an Irish Parliament would be disposed to feel if it found itself compelled to impose taxes for a war in which the sympathies of Ireland were directly opposed to the sympathies of Great Britain, or were even hindered from imposing taxes for some purely Irish object by the weight of the taxation for Imperial purposes which it disapproved. Is it even conceivable that such a Parliament could long exist without becoming a centre of the fiercest disloyalty and even treason? Or put aside questions of finance, and look only at ecclesiastical policy. Would not it be very probable that one of the first efforts of Ireland's separate Parliament would be to re-establish a Church in Ireland, but not this time a Protestant but a Catholic Church—an effort which would probably give rise to civil war unless England interfered to thwart the wish of the Catholic party, in which case the danger of a violent disruption would arise again from another cause? It is in fact as plain as common sense can make it to all who look at the condition of Ireland with impartial eyes, that "Home Rule" would be but the first step in a series of virulent disputes as to the political relations of the two islands, which could hardly end except in separation, or re-conquest with all the evils that that would bring in its train. The Home Rule party would certainly be imprudent, but they would be far more logical, if they were to raise a cry at once for an Independent Irish Republic.

## MR. GLADSTONE AND THE PEOPLE.

(*From "The Economist," 4th November,* 1871.)

MR. GLADSTONE'S speech at Greenwich marks a new era in English politics,—not that it is for him a very great speech, and still less that it is the speech of a statesman as such,—if it *had* been, in that place and delivered to such an audience it would probably have been a great mistake and a sad failure,—but that it marks the coming of the time when it will be one of the most important qualifications of a Prime Minister to exert a direct control over the masses—when the ability to reach them, not as his views may be filtered through an intermediate class of political teachers and writers, but *directly* by the vitality of his own mind, will give a vast advantage in the political race to any statesman. We are not saying that the power of addressing twenty-five thousand people for two hours, and holding their attention and interest in spite of plenty of hostile elements in the great crowd, is one which above all others we delight to see in a leading statesman. As far as our own tastes go, we might prefer the sort of statesman who could only reach the nation through comparatively select audiences like Parliament, whose power is reserved for the higher regions of statesmanship, and who possesses none of the notes of the great popular orator. All we are saying is that the time is evidently approaching when such statesmen will be at a considerable disadvantage, even as heads of an Administration, when a power like that evinced by Mr. Gladstone will be of the very first importance even for his position as leader of the House of Commons and first Minister of the Queen. Criticise Mr. Gladstone's speech as you will—virulently, contemptuously, patronisingly, compassionately, or from any other point of view, however depre-

ciating,—no politician in his senses will deny that it has added greatly to the strength of the Government's position ; that it has to some extent neutralised much of the political result of the process of many months' slow decay and demolition of his power. If Parliament were to meet again to-morrow, Mr. Gladstone's position would be quite changed. It would be at once felt by all his discontented allies as well by his party foes that Mr. Gladstone's direct command over the people is still immense,—that the result of an appeal to the people by him against a divided and hostile Parliament would very probably end in his full reinstatement in power, with as large a majority as ever. Mr. Gladstone has illustrated most remarkably his reserve power outside Parliament. No English Minister probably ever had less of a personal Parliamentary following than Mr. Gladstone. There he has no phalanx like Lord Russell's Whig phalanx, and Lord Palmerston's personal admirers. In Parliament he has no body-guard. But he has shown once more how easily he can get the ear of the electors themselves, and that under circumstances of no little difficulty,—circumstances in which both his policy and his shortcomings as a local representative combined to make him unpopular with his audience. Parliament fully appreciates this reserve power in a Prime Minister, which secures him, as it were, a separate and private appeal to the people,—an appeal not simply through the people's representatives, and what the people may or may not understand of his reported Parliamentary speeches, but by direct personal influence. Parliament may not like it,—may think it even a dangerous power,—may echo the grumblings of three years ago over Mr. Gladstone's stumping tour in Lancashire ; but Parliament will recognise and respect it as a new store of political force, as a guarantee that the Premier has more direct relations to the people than any other Premier of our times, and that if he becomes unpopular with the representatives of the people, he may still be more popular with the people themselves than even those representatives. Undoubtedly Mr. Gladstone's Greenwich speech will serve as a conspicuous mark for the date when it first became advisable for a Minister to cultivate the gifts of a great popular orator,—an

orator who can deal with political topics in the broad, easy and animated style which touches the people, and without any of that subtle flavour of Parliamentary skill which only suits the statesman.

Mr. Gladstone not only displayed this sort of power in a very remarkable degree at Greenwich, but what is quite as remarkable as anything else, it is a late-acquired power. He was from the first no doubt a good Parliamentary speaker. Lord Macaulay, in his review of Mr. Gladstone's early book on Church and State, speaks of his Parliamentary promise in high terms. But the constitution of his mind was so complex, and his style of argument so little popular, that no one certainly then thought of him as a popular orator. Sir R. Peel, if we remember his words rightly, says in his political memoranda, that Mr. Gladstone brought "his high character and great attainments" to the aid of the Conservative Ministry, but evidently thought little of his oratorical powers. Indeed, it was not till he busied himself with finance,—*i.e.* with very definitely marked-out subject-matter, in which there was no room for subtleties, though much for explanatory and expository dissertation,—that his remarkable faculty as an orator, his artistic power of planning out his subjects, his ease and vivacity in making them interesting to others, his skill in illustrating principles, his animation in recounting facts, began to be generally understood. And it was far later again that he acquired any of that power of fascinating and influencing a genuine multitude, by which Mr. Bright first became noticeable. Mr. Gladstone's rhetorical powers, at first as little popular as great fluency and earnestness could well be, have gradually worked themselves out into a real command of popular sympathies and the popular intelligence, and the fact is one that at so critical a moment as this will hardly fail to be of the greatest significance to his but recently tottering Government.

We are quite willing to admit that the speech itself, though a very powerful and lively speech from a Prime Minister to his constituents, was in no sense the speech of the head of a great Administration declaring and expounding his policy.

Such a speech could hardly have been made to 25,000 people in the open air under the conditions of time and space under which he spoke. A man who has to exert his voice to its utmost, and to interest a great crowd for a considerable time, cannot by any possibility trace out the fine lines of a national policy, even if he had spare energy enough to concentrate his mind upon them in the face of such physical difficulties. But as the speech of a Prime Minister who is also a representative to his constituents, it is not easy to over-estimate its ability and its interest. The historical illustration of the difficulty of keeping together large Parliamentary majorities, as introductory to his own expression of confidence in his colleagues and himself, and his complete refusal to admit that this address was his "last dying speech and confession,"—his bold expression of continued confidence in his Irish policy,—his reply to the charge of niggardly economies, which was as far from any yielding of principle as it was from any unfair attack on those Conservative predecessors who had yet, as he showed, economised (and quite rightly economised) more labour in the national dockyards than ever he and his colleagues,—his defence of his military policy,—the moderate and just stand he took upon his education policy,—and finally, his extremely lively and true remarks on the fundamental popularity of the House of Lords, even with the working classes, and the undesirability therefore of doing away with the hereditary principle,—were all treated with a lightness and yet energy of touch, and connected together in so natural and taking a manner, that Mr. Gladstone taught the audience, which he was also amusing, without letting them know that he was teaching them. And the last part of his speech on the mistake made by the representatives of skilled labour in their negotiations with certain peers and baronets, through Mr. Scott Russell, and in venturing to hope that legislation could do for them what really nothing but individual energy and self-denial could ever achieve, was more than instructive and lively; it went thoroughly home to his audience, and made them feel how thoroughly Mr. Gladstone understood their position, and how steadily he could resist unwise

demands, even while heartily entering into their most urgent wants.

Thus when Mr. Gladstone left the Greenwich hustings, his Government certainly stood in a far stronger position than it has done for many months back. The nation has again learnt to realise that its Prime Minister understands both its unwise wishes and its genuine wants better than almost any other man in it, and that even if misunderstandings must arise between the Cabinet and Parliament, there will be a very strong disposition on the part of the masses to believe what the Prime Minister says of Parliament, more easily than what Parliament says of the Prime Minister.

## MAZZINI.

(*From "The Economist,"* 16*th March*, 1872.)

THE death of Mazzini means the suppression of a great political force which had latterly been used, certainly not for unworthy, but for impossible, and therefore anarchical ends, but which undoubtedly had revivified the political life of Italy, and furnished the raw materials of which the great political strategy of Count Cavour was able to make such wonderful use. Cavour without Mazzini would have been an engineer without a supply of force. Mazzini without Cavour would have been a great force without any guarantee for its successful organisation.

And yet Mazzini was by no means like Garibaldi—a man without political sense and judgment. He was a sort of half-way house between "the inspired idiot" of Caprera and the wily diplomatist of Turin. Mazzini had a very great and powerful governing mind. His personal influence over young men was something rarely paralleled. When he could choose his own instruments, and choose such as were susceptible of being impressed by his own ardent enthusiasm, he was a man of very rare administrative power. The Association of Young Italy bore wonderful testimony to his extraordinary capacity for diffusing his own disinterestedness and his own faith in national life and unity, with even thrilling intensity, through a widely-spread network of political societies. More than this, his administration of Rome during the dangerous months in which the triumvirs ruled it in 1849 was, as everybody who has heard the details of it admits, a perfect marvel of sagacity and moderation. Mazzini's administrative power was indeed very great when he could act through men whose loyalty to himself he had secured by possessing them with his own

patriotic idealism. His lofty and just, if deeply prejudiced, type of character was wonderfully rich in personal insight, and in days of great national enthusiasm and danger such as befell Rome during his administration, he had every advantage for displaying his highest qualities. It was only when he had to act with men of equal power with himself, but possessed with radically different notions of political equity and patriotic duty, that Mazzini failed. He was an idealist who could allow generously for the deficiencies and selfishness of the people so long as he was not asked to work himself through the lower order of motives. In Rome his magnanimity of policy, and his tolerance for the beliefs which he held to be dangerous superstitions, excited the admiration even of Conservative statesmen like Lord Palmerston. But Mazzini, like all men whose belief is essentially of the ardent religious type, could not endure to appeal to the low worldly motives and the self-indulgent impulses of "such creatures as we are in such a world as the present". His horror of the adroit arts of statesmanship was profound. He could bear to labour for the debased and the ignorant, for selfishness and vice, but he could not bear to take its opposition into account when considering what he ought to do. He was, it is said, in 1849 offered the Premiership by Charles Albert, on condition that he should give up his larger schemes for Italy, and get the Republicans of Lombardy (then for a moment conquered from Austria) to accede to the surrender of Lombardy to the Piedmontese King. He refused, and would have thought himself for ever degraded if he had acceded to the idea, and he at least would have been *really* debased by the compromise, for his life was lived in the ideal world, and if he was not to preach a united and glorified Italy, he was nothing. Yet it was a weakness, and a great weakness, in his character, that he could hardly conceive of the honesty of statesmen who took a very different and far more historical view of Italian progress, who were content to develop the only popular Monarchy of the Peninsula into an Italian Monarchy, and to do so by degrees, pausing for long intervals to wait for better opportunity and stronger aid. That to him

was no better than the worldly wisdom of an apostle sent to preach a gospel to a great race, who should have accepted a rich bishopric offered him on condition of his ceasing to stir beyond a particular province, and should have settled down in it to enjoy the world instead of invading and conquering it. Mazzini was quite statesman enough to know that Italy could not in a moment, no nor in many years or generations, even approach the type of his own ideal republic, that she must for many generations be more or less swayed by the historical conceptions of the past, and that the less abrupt and violent the change of outward form proposed, the more chance of stability there would be. He knew this so well that while throwing his own influence most enthusiastically into the Republican scale, he more than once offered to leave Italy to decide for herself on the new form of Government, when once she should be free and united, and in a position to judge calmly of her own wishes. Yet this concession was really formal, and was nothing but the sacrifice made by his own strong prepossessions to his intellect. Mazzini might have known, and somewhere deep down in his mind probably did know, that this sort of concession was perfectly empty, that you cannot hold-over these sort of questions till a nation is ready to decide them—that the pretence of holding them over gives a shock to "the historical consciousness" of the people, that you must work with the constitutional materials you have, without throwing the slur on them of proclaiming to the whole people that they are but provisional and liable to a speedy repudiation.

The truth was that Mazzini's own historical sense was completely at issue with his religious or politico-religious convictions, and that the latter were too strong for the former. Had he been wise he would have accepted in his latter days the rôle of a political teacher rather than a practical intriguer. Italy had won, under the certainly by no means stainless political character of Victor Emanuel and his statesmen, a far larger measure of unity and freedom than anyone but a fanatic had any right to hope for. To improve the standard of political faith in Italy, to disseminate higher ideas of free-

dom, purer notions of political duty and manliness, might have been left to Mazzini, in spite of his accepting the actual *régime*, as any practical politician would have accepted it in his place. But Mazzini could not bear to admit that "the logic of facts" is one of compromise, which must admit very mixed motives if it will win anything at all in the sphere of practice. He almost created the force which did so much to regenerate Italy; but in Italy itself he could not endure to admit that the regeneration was full of alloys, and that Italy remained only an earthly country in very decidedly earthly moral conditions. He almost undid—at any rate he did his best to undo—the great good he had done, because he could not recognise in it his own ideal. In England, in France, in Germany, his political conceptions were far soberer and saner; there he could bear to see that perfection was impossible, and that even imperfection must not be too often disturbed if the imperfect elements were to be lessened. But in Italy he was a dreamer—a dreamer even in his creative work—and still more a dreamer when he tried to destroy what he himself had created because it did not shadow forth to his exacting eyes any of the beauty and glory of his own dream.

## THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

(*From "The Economist," 11th January*, 1873.)

THE death of the Emperor Napoleon throws a flood of light upon his later life. It was in 1868 that he first began perceptibly to lose confidence in himself, to shrink from the responsibility of his own power, and to desire if means might be found to transmute his Cæsarism into Constitutional Monarchy. Observers imagined that he was alarmed by the progress of Prussia, and the foreseen necessity of embarking on a new and a great campaign; and no doubt the success of Prince Bismarck's policy did weigh upon his mind and disturb his judgment, but as is now perceived, there was another cause. He had been attacked by a malady, which, besides threatening the constitution, exerts a singular power over the mind, frequently depriving it of nervous strength, of energy, and of the capacity of resolution. It was as a victim to incipient stone that the Emperor formed the Ollivier Ministry and his new plan of Government, and many of his delays, hesitations, and vacillations, together with the febrile irritability with which he pressed forward his idea of a new plebiscite, may be attributed to the growing, though secret, influence of his malady. Under its influence he ceased to be able to examine into details, lost his confidence in old friends, and began to indulge in the despondency which sent him in 1870 to the field a man beaten in advance. He lost the inclination to take the trouble to select new men who had become indispensable, and to bear with men who had independent opinions, or opinions hostile to his own. When during the campaign his exertions increased his complaint, he had no longer the energy to direct; and when at Sedan a tremendous effort might have saved him, he had not the physical power to make it, or even to entertain

strongly the idea of making it. His later failures were in fact the results of his physical condition, or at all events so far the results of it, that it is impossible to form a just conception of the degree to which his original powers had been impaired.

In spite of his failure, and of the stream of contemporary thought, which is greatly influenced by the misfortunes that failure brought on France, we believe those powers to have been very considerable. Napoleon the Third, though not a great administrator—a function for which he was too indolent—was perhaps the most reflective and *in*sighted, not far-sighted, of the modern statesmen of France. He perceived years before other men the spell which the name of his uncle threw over the Frenchmen who had forgotten the disasters of 1815. He comprehended years before other men that the peasantry were the governing body, and would, if secured in their properties, adhere firmly to any strong Executive. He understood the latent power existing in the idea of nationalities years before old diplomatists could see in it anything but a dream. He was aware of the resources which might be developed by a Free-trade policy before a single politician in France had realised the first principles of economic finance. Alone among French politicians he contrived to conciliate the Papacy, or rather to master it, without breaking with the Republicans, and alone among Frenchmen he ventured to declare that England was the best ally France could have. Whenever his brain could work freely without necessity for previous labour he was a clear-sighted statesman, and it was only when a subject had to be learned up, like the condition of the Northern States of the Union or the organisation of Prussia, that his mental power became useless or even deceptive. We are by no means convinced that had he not gone to war his new Constitution would have failed, for it would have given France her freedom, and yet allowed, through the plebiscite, of the occasional revolutions which France from time to time will always demand. A new generation of men would have come forward, and would have exercised the power which the Emperor, pressed by pain, by despondency, and by indolence, no longer desired to wield. He had perceived long before his

great adherents that Frenchmen were tired of compression, and the violence of the expansion was due in great measure to his decaying energy and resolution. Up to the day of his death he could still be resolved, but it was only in the passive way—the way possible to a man not required to do anything but sit quietly in an arm-chair and weigh advice. The effect of his bodily health is an argument to the discredit not the credit of personal government, but it must be considered in any just estimate of the Emperor's mental power. We do not expect from M. Thiers the pliability of a young man, nor is it fair to expect from a middle-aged Emperor, tortured with the stone, the serene reflectiveness of a political philosopher.

It is too early yet to discuss frankly the character of the Emperor, but as we have indicated the greatest of his mental powers—cool and broad political insight—we may also indicate the greatest of his mental defects as a politician. He had, we think, an incapability, almost beyond precedent, of securing competent agents. He never discovered a great soldier. He never found out a great statesman. He never secured a great financier. Only two of his agents—M. de Morny and M. Pietri—can be pronounced first-rate men of any kind, and the mass of them could hardly be classed as fourth-rate or fifth-rate men. This was the more remarkable because he himself was not unpleasant to his people, not capricious, not exacting, not disposed to change; and as France is full of able men only too anxious to serve, it must have been due to some want in his own mind—a want which it is by no means easy to understand. Mere want of insight into individual character does not explain the failure, for that would leave promotion open to everybody, and consequently leave to the able all their chances unimpaired. Mere indolence does not explain it, for amidst the 500,000 officials employed in France it does not take very much trouble to pick out a few strong men; and mere carelessness does not explain it, for the Emperor was well aware how badly he was sometimes served. It is difficult, considering the wealth of intellect in France, to doubt that the Emperor had the foible of men whose position is slightly uncertain, that he was jealous of very able persons, particularly if they were statesmen; regarded

all such as his uncle regarded Moreau—as possible rivals and successors. Such men are usually independent, and he wanted his agents to obey. Such men in France argue well, and the Emperor was not good at debate either in public or private. Such men above all, if Frenchmen, are anxious to make their personality felt, and the Emperor could not bear that any personality should be felt except his own, lest it should attract the regard of a population accustomed to raise its favourites to the top. It was this feeling which induced him twice to accompany his armies, though he knew he was no soldier, and so secure that no general should obtain the suffrages of the army. It was this feeling which made him close up so many political careers, till it became nearly impossible for an able man in France to manifest his ability, and this feeling which induced him to prefer mere red-tapists in the War Department, where he never but once had a first-rate man, Marshal Niel, who was practically nominated by the army. Above all it was this feeling, greatly exasperated by disease, which induced him to underrate his own position, and doubt whether without victory he could retain his hold on France. There is not a doubt that, if he had remained quiet, the peasantry and the army would have remained true to him; but he could not with his morbid sense of insecurity, irritated to madness by disease, believe the truth, and therefore he fell. We shall, as time goes on and memoirs appear, know much more of Napoleon III. than we do now, but we believe, when all is known, the world will decide that his grand merit as a politician was a certain clearness of insight, and that his grand defect was self-distrust, leading to jealous impatience of capacities unlike or superior to his own. To declare him a great man may be impossible in the face of his failures, but to declare him a small one is ridiculous. Small men dying in exile do not leave wide gaps in the European political horizon.

## THE LATE MR. GRAVES.

(*From "The Economist," 25th January*, 1873.)

THE generality of the sorrow at the sudden death of Mr. Graves, and the depth of the respect shown for his memory, almost prove that both must be deserved. That a man of Irish birth, who started in Liverpool with but little fortune and with no particular connections, should, at so early an age as fifty-five, be Member for that great city, have an almost universal popularity there, receive at his election more votes than any borough Member ever obtained before, attain an excellent position in Parliament, and receive at his unlooked-for death marks of attachment and grief from all ranks of persons, and even from Royalty itself, is very remarkable, but it would be quite incomprehensible without real and great merit. Only fine qualities of some kind could enable a man who began with so few advantages to obtain so much influence over so many and so various persons, and to win so much regard from them.

Those best acquainted with the sphere of action will admit that business ability alone would never have given Mr. Graves the position he held, or have attracted such multitudes to his funeral. Business ability is not an uncommon quality in Liverpool; a very considerable number of persons could be named there who can transact commercial affairs almost as well as it is possible to transact them. No skill in money matters could elevate anyone much above many of them, for their skill in such matters is almost perfect. And though commercial ability gains money it does not win hearts, and it is plain that Mr. Graves gained at Liverpool and elsewhere a sympathy and an affection which can never be obtained by mere transacting power. Nor was Mr. Graves's success in his

constituency and in Parliament due to any singular gift of oratory. On the contrary, there are plenty of men who speak quite as well as Mr. Graves whom no one cares for, either in Parliament or out of it, and on whose death, however sudden, no one would grieve except a small circle just around them. Nor would mere "hard work," to which we have seen Mr. Graves's success, both in life and Parliament, ascribed, at all account for the peculiar nature of that success. The genuine faculty of hard work is not a common quality, and we quite agree that Mr. Graves possessed it; but we could name men even in Parliament who work quite as hard for whom no one cares—who have won no sympathy, and attained no respect.

The real secret of Mr. Graves's peculiar success was his singularly unique character. He possessed in combination two important qualities, which are not very common singly, which are very rarely joined together, but the combination of which has singular power. A *very* high degree of fairness and honesty is not so very common in mercantile or in any other line of life. A certain decent amount of honesty is very fairly diffused; the higher kind of nicety and honour, which every one feels though no one can precisely describe it, is unhappily not common. And every one who met Mr. Graves, even casually, became at once convinced that he possessed this delicate and indefinable quality, and those who knew him long and well were unanimous that this casual conviction was justified. He was a man whom no one need watch, and who might be trusted implicitly, and with anything.

And besides this he was a consummate manager and manipulator of men. For the most part there is about people so honest as he was a certain rigidity of manner and stiffness of mind. They do not easily enter into the thoughts and minds of others; they are blunt and decided, and go to their object in a plain straightforward way. They do not perceive instinctively what others are thinking of; in consequence they are bad negotiators. They do not see what is in the minds of the other side, and so they say the wrong thing, and negotiation fails. But Mr. Graves was a warm negotiator. He could not help seeing what was in the minds of those with

whom he was concerned. He adapted himself to it instinctively; was astonished that anyone could help seeing it. He was as pliable as a diplomatist could be, and he was as honest as it was possible to be. Indeed, an honest negotiator is the honestest of men, for it is in the making of delicate arrangements, and in the nice manipulation of men, that the highest honesty is tested most nicely.

We do not at all mean that Mr. Graves's powers were of a moral kind only. The intellectual qualities required for a good diplomatist are of an extremely high kind. To have in a large measure the comprehension to understand and the tact to manage other men, is very rare, and Mr. Graves had these gifts in singular abundance. We need not say that besides these, he had all the qualities of a man of business, and that he had commercial knowledge and a fine practical understanding. All this has been said for the last few days so often that it is needless to repeat it. We have only tried to analyse a little his character, so as to give to those who did not know him some vague idea of his peculiar gifts and power.

That we have done so with a painful feeling we need not say. There is a charm about men like him which no analysis can reach, and no pen can set down. And those who have that charm are perhaps most apt to be taken from us. A coarse and hard man of business might have done Mr. Graves's work and more, and been with us still; but the crush of Parliamentary and the struggle of commercial life are most trying to the finer fibres of human nature. In such scenes we should always watch with the most anxiety the lives of those whom we can least spare, and whom we should most wish to keep.

## MR. FAWCETT.

(*From "The Economist," 8th February*, 1873.)

It is not the lot of the *Economist* often to agree completely with Mr. Fawcett, but we do not know that there is a more useful member in the House of Commons, in which he occupies a somewhat exceptional position. Debarred by a physical infirmity from office, and not possessed of popular arts, Mr. Fawcett can hardly be regarded as the leader of any section of the Commons, and yet he is received on rising as no mere borough member ever is received. A scholar, a doctrinaire, and at the same time member for the Radical majority of one of the most Radical constituencies in the kingdom, Mr. Fawcett is listened to by Tories of the "highest" type, and his speeches frequently tell distinctly on divisions. He is not popular, he is not eloquent in the sense in which Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright is eloquent, and he is not a man of business; but nevertheless his weight in the conduct of national affairs is seldom on any question inappreciable, and on one or two questions, such as India, is so marked as to excite considerable jealousy in official quarters. Part of his influence is no doubt due to his courage, to the coolness with which he defends doctrines known to be unpopular; but the major portion of it is due, we believe, to the hard common sense, and adherence to scientific principles, by which his Radicalism is modified. The most prominent defect of the Radicalism of the present day is a new one,—one quite unknown to the great Radicals of our history,—a certain pulpiness or sentimentality which we are accustomed to attribute only to the Liberal politicians of the continent, and from this Mr. Fawcett is entirely free.

Believing that force is an element, and a great element, in human affairs, he never allows himself to talk nonsense about the inutility of armies and navies, but in a hard, cool way argues that we must not have too much or too little navy or army. Believing that finance is a necessary element in politics, he never allows himself to be drawn into absurdities about reductions or about expenditures, but maintains that this or that tax or reduction is good or bad, for such and such reasons; that the Treasury must be kept full, and that if taxation hurts people, well, it is the essential quality of taxation to hurt very much. Believing that we ought to keep India, he never makes wild speeches against Indian Administration, but accepts the duty, and labours with all his might to have the duty done in the way he approves. We do not agree on the whole with his way, thinking him deceived by an agrarian crotchet, but we do most heartily honour the immense labour and energy with which he has fought for his thesis—that taxation is the crux of the Indian Administration, and that Indian Administrators have, on the whole, mismanaged it. The point however on which his speciality comes out most strongly is the law of property. Radicals believe in property like other men, but they are always apt to leave an impression that they at heart hold all property to belong to the State, and to be leased in trust for the public convenience, or rather for the convenience of any section of the public which happens to want some of it. Mr. Fawcett never will give in to that tone at all. Whatever the subject he always defends the well-understood economic laws, whether they are popular or unpopular, with the most hearty belief in their accuracy, venturing, for instance, to say that the poor ought not to be exempt from taxation in proportion because that is robbery of the rich. Why are they to be robbed? The "hard," or, to use a common expression, the cruel, consequences that flow from economic laws do not strike him any more than the hard consequences which flow from any other laws regulating the economy of the world. If a good person does not save, a good person will want, and that seems to modern philanthropy very hard, hard enough to justify taking something from a

bad person to give to the good one. "No," says Mr. Fawcett, "property is independent of goodness and badness. If a good person puts his finger in the candle, his finger will be burnt, and you have no right, because of that, to burn the bad man's finger." We are not of course quoting under any form, however condensed, but that is the drift of one or two of his recent speeches, and hard, sound sense of that sort, when coming from a member whose Radicalism is not doubtful, is in its way almost invaluable. It would have little effect coming from Mr. Henley, because he would be supposed to be wishing to keep up the old order of things; but coming from a member known not to wish that, it has a decided effect. It puts an end to a great many fears, and it prevents a great many silly proposals which but for the certainty of Mr. Fawcett's dangerous opposition might exercise a certain influence over the public mind. The member for Brighton in fact compels his whole party to think before they speak, to try their ideas by facts, to ascertain—to speak plain English—before they produce their proposals how they will appear to men who are not moved by phrases, who will in their commonplace, clear-headed way see what effect any given law or project of law is to have on the ultimate prosperity of the nation. He makes Radicalism intelligible and tolerable to men who have something to lose. A member of this kind, whether his hearer agrees with him or not—and we, for example, very often disagree—is most valuable to the House of Commons, where Mr. Fawcett often makes a speech which, to men heated with oratory and sentimentalities and exaggerated ideas of their constituents' wishes, has the bracing and tonic effect of a cold douche very heartily thrown.

Mr. Fawcett's speech on Monday at Brighton was not one of the best illustrations of his especial utility, but still it was full of it. His main idea was a statesmanlike one, the necessity of considering the Treasury before considering everybody's complaint. All manner of half-considerate people have been asking during the recess all manner of contradictory things,—want, for instance, the malt tax abolished, the income tax abolished, the rates thrown on the general Treasury, and ex-

penditure for a host of philanthropic schemes. Well, asks Mr. Fawcett, at some length, who is going to pay the bill? How do these people propose to empty the State till and make it pay everything, to add new charges and abolish old revenue, to, in fact, "surpass the dreams of the old alchemists, and extract wealth out of nothing"? If you abolish the malt tax you must, at all events, keep the rates. If you abolish the income tax, you must give up great expensive schemes like State-aided emigration. Mr. Fawcett does not speak as many Radicals would have spoken against the landed interest, which is making, or supposed to be making, these demands, or declare rates a blessing, or assert that the income tax is unimproveable, but he brings the orators to book summarily with hard common sense. Their proposals, good or bad, cost money. Where is it to come from? Some people advocate the abolition of schedule D, and the substitution of a tax on property. Why, asked Mr. Fawcett, should we tax a man who has bought something with his savings to exempt the man who might save £20,000 a year? Others ask the total abolition of the tax, but many of them want also a free breakfast table. There is a very general and a very useless moan over the frequency of strikes. They are very injurious, says Mr. Fawcett, but until capital and labour have identical pecuniary interests they cannot be prevented, they are our mode of fighting the battle, and a mild one, leading us on through inconveniences into a happier future. Others again are indignant with the expenditure on the Army and Navy; but after all, says Mr. Fawcett, the prodigal expenditure of other nations upon means of attack must exercise some influence upon our expenditure on means of defence. These seem to many men almost platitudes, but they are only platitudes because they are truths, and they are uttered before a popular constituency by a man who accepts what is called the Radical creed quite heartily, and, as far as appears, carries his Radical followers heartily with him. Mr. Fawcett, in fact, does find means to bring the extreme Liberals into full connection with the quiet mass of hard-headed opinion existing in the country, and that is a very creditable and bene-

ficial feat to perform. We do not want parties to be divided in this country as they are in France, till one set of men scarcely understand another set, and till the rule of the majority is regarded by minorities almost as the rule of an invading enemy. Mr. Fawcett talks a Radicalism Whigs can understand, and therefore a Radicalism which inclines them to examine all Radicalism a little more closely, and to dread it a little less.

## THE GOVERNMENT AND THE DISSENTERS.

(*From "The Economist," 29th March*, 1873.)

A STEP of some importance was taken towards the healing of the breach between the Government and the Dissenters, by the large vote on Mr. Osborne Morgan's Burial Bill, which passed the second reading by a majority of 63. Mr. Disraeli has apparently given up the policy after which, in his political novels, he has so often shown a hankering, of winning over the Wesleyans to his side. Nothing could be harder or less conciliating than his tone towards the whole body of Dissenters on Wednesday afternoon. He classed them altogether, and he set the Church of England over against them rather as a distinct sect which had acquired a right to the fabrics and churchyards of England through the negligence and laches of the Dissenters and their refusal to pay church-rates, than as still claiming in any sense to be a national Church, and eager therefore to offer to all English citizens their proper privileges as at least potential members of that Church. This line of Mr. Disraeli's was evidently carefully considered, and intended to reassure his own followers of his staunch Church Conservatism. Nay, he went further, and gave the Dissenters a broad hint that they had lost a good deal of political power, which they wielded under the Reform Bill of 1832, since he gathered the poorer householders into the Electorate in 1867. They were no longer so powerful in the constituencies as they had been, he said—and this was his doing. Unless they allied themselves with the Church, and turned their common forces against the fashionable scepticism, they would find themselves but a weak political body in future. This was a significant attitude to take up, and was no doubt intended to soothe the grave distrust which Mr.

Disraeli's followers feel of his professed attachment to the Church of England. He believed that by thus "burning his ships," and telling the Dissenters openly that he had undermined their power and meant to defy them, he would regain the confidence of some of his own discontented adherents.

This attitude of Mr. Disraeli's makes the opportunity for a hearty reconciliation between the Government and the Dissenters particularly promising. And in view of a dissolution, which, whether it happens this year or next, cannot be long deferred, this reconciliation is plainly most desirable. The Nonconformists have now seen that their alliance is not only not courted by the Tories, but is declined by anticipation. Whoever gives them anything, the Tories will not. They know, moreover, that a real Tory success with the constituencies is, if not very probable, yet by no means off the cards. Whether the Tories fail or not in the next appeal to the country, it is tolerably certain that they will not fail in greatly diminishing the great Liberal majority. The apparent ill-success of Mr. Gladstone's great Irish policy in conciliating Ireland, the alarm produced by the chronic troubles in France, and the still worse chronic troubles in Spain, above all, the fright which the great succession of strikes has given to every small tradesman and every small farmer in England, have all tended to diminish for a while the prestige of Liberal policy, and to carry a great many doubtful minds into the timid Conservative camp. If then the Dissenters really want a Liberal policy, this is not the time to desert their party. If they do, they may very well contrive to bring in a Conservative Government which, if it is prudent, will manage to rule the country for seven years to come. If the Dissenters desert Mr. Gladstone at the next dissolution, they will not only not obtain from the Tories the Education and Church policy they desire, but they will obtain from them a very different policy indeed, and one vastly more hostile to their own interests than any policy which even their prepossession can ascribe to the present Government.

On the other hand we have always maintained that the Government on their part should do what they can to satisfy

their Dissenting supporters that their political claims are regarded as claims of a very high kind, the neglect of which might fairly be resented on the part of a political body so active and strenuous for Liberal statesmen as they have been. The conduct of the Government, in relation to the Burial Bill, will give them some assurance of this. But they may fairly claim something more, and, in relation to the Education Act, it is only reasonable to grant something more. However small the scruple may seem to be, which the Dissenters have raised on the subject of the 25th clause of that Act, it may be admitted at once that it is not the only cause of offence the Act has given them. Very naturally they hoped that the Education Act would do a great deal to destroy the caste-advantages which the Church enjoys in the country. And unquestionably, owing no doubt to the praiseworthy zeal of Churchmen and also to their great advantages over the Dissenters in wealth, it has not had that effect, but, in the country districts at least, the opposite effect. We do not say and do not think that the Government can fairly be blamed for this. But it must be admitted that it is a fair cause of disappointment to the Dissenters, and that they are therefore at least very excusable for criticising with more jealousy these minor provisions of the Education Act which tend in the same direction, and which are not of the essence of the Act, than they would be if the effect of the Act had not in country districts been distinctly favourable to the power of the Church. We say therefore that as regards the clause which enables School Boards to devote a (certainly not very large) proportion of the Education rate to paying the fees of pauper children in denominational schools, a clause to which it is quite conceivable that a very scrupulously controversial conscience might feel serious moral objection, there is a very strong *prima facie* case for relief. It is, as far as it goes, very much in the nature of a minute church and chapel rate; and a good deal of the money payable under this clause to denominational schools is exceedingly likely, considering the poverty of the Irish colonies in our great towns, to go to Roman Catholic schools, which are a special object of dread to Protestant con-

sciences. Here then is a clear case for concession. The Government have promised a Bill to amend the Education Act, and we venture to express our hope that it will treat the Dissenters fairly if not generously; and will not take any account of the hostility likely to be created on the Tory side of the House. We do not think that the efficient education of the children should be sacrificed to any party exigences, but there are, no doubt, ways of satisfying the scrupulous Dissenting consciences, in which there would be no danger that the interests of the children would suffer. We are aware that the Dissenters also demand the extension of compulsion and of School Boards to all the rural districts. We are by no means clear that this is possible without creating a very great prejudice against education in the rural districts where the poverty is great and the dread of rates even greater. But however this may be—and on this point the Dissenters must be prepared to be reasonable, if they are satisfied on the other issues, more especially their own—we are quite sure that the Education Department could find more than one remedy for the grievance now contained in the twenty-fifth clause, and more than one remedy which would be perfectly satisfactory. And if it can be found, it should. It would be a very great misfortune to the country if the divisions among the Liberals prove to be so great at the next elections, that the Conservatives may gain the opportunity for which they are hoping to arrest the progress of society, and that gradual but steady inroad on mischievous traditions which has now gone on almost uninterruptedly for forty years. But Mr. Disraeli's boast that he has got down to a class in the electorate which prefers old abuses to new remedies is probably not by any means an idle boast; and therefore it becomes all good Liberals to be on their guard and act with harmony as well as vigour.

## THE LATE MR. MILL.

(*From "The Economist," 17th May*, 1873.)

THE sudden death of Mr. Mill has caused a deep feeling in all the intellectual part of England. Few living philosophers have had so much influence; fewer still have inspired so much personal respect—we might say so much personal affection—among many who had never seen and who were never likely to see him. The personal attachment of the inner circle of his followers was far greater. To that inner circle we can make no claim to belong; we can only trace slightly, and in a manner which may not satisfy them, a rough outline of what seem to us the peculiarities of his mind and the sources of his influence.

To treatises such as Mr. Mill's *Logic* and his *Political Economy*, it is not usually easy to give important praise which no one will deny. The subjects with which they deal, the *logic* particularly, are too full of doubts and too fertile in animosities. But no one, we think, will deny that hardly ever, perhaps never, in the history of philosophy, have two books so finished and so ample been written by a man who had only his leisure moments to give to them, and who had a day's work to do besides. The quantity of writing in these four thick volumes is not small; but many men, in detached essays and on varied points, equal or surpass that quantity. Even a daily occupation in laborious business is easily compatible with much desultory labour. But Mr. Mill's *Logic* and his *Political Economy* are not collections of desultory remarks; they are orderly, systematic works, in which the beginning has reference to the end, and almost every part has some relation, often a very close relation, to most other parts. To compose such books requires an incessant reminiscence of the past, and

an equally incessant foresight of the future; and both these, more almost than anything else, strain and fatigue the brain. Only men with their whole time and whole strength can usually accomplish such tasks. But Mr. Mill wrote both these books when a laborious man of business, who had daily difficult and exhausting duties to perform as well. Instead of wondering at occasional faults in such books, we should rather wonder that they exist at all.

The great merit of Mr. Mill, we think, was the merit of intellectual combination. Many philosophers—several contemporaries even—were much more eminent for absolute originality. But no one comes near Mr. Mill in the art—the invaluable art when, as now, philosophy is at once rich and fragmentary—of piecing together. In Mr. Mill's great works theories are placed in just juxtaposition which were wide apart before, and thirteen are named in the same sentence, where one would have hardly comprehended how they could be coupled together. Mr. Grote thus described the *Logic* in the *Westminster Review* —the other day as we may say—in 1865 :—

"The *System of Logic* appears to us to present the most important advance in speculative theory which the present century has witnessed. Either half of it, the Ratiocinative or the Inductive, would have surpassed any previous work on the same subject. The Inductive half discriminates and brings into clear view, for the first time, those virtues of method which have insensibly grown into habits among consummate scientific inquirers of the post-Baconian age, as well as the fallacies by which some of these authors have been misled. The Ratiocinative half, dealing with matters which had already been well handled by Dutrieu and other scholastic logicians, invests their dead though precise formalism with a real life and application to the actual process of finding and proving truth. But besides thus working each half up to perfection, Mr. Mill has performed the still more difficult task of overcoming the repugnance, apparently an inveterate repugnance, between them, so as chemically to combine the two into one homogeneous compound; thus presenting the problem of Reasoned Truth, Inference, Proof, and Disproof, as

one connected whole. For ourselves, we still recollect the mist which was cleared from our minds when we first read the *System of Logic*, very soon after it was published. We were familiar with the Syllogistic Logic in Burgersdicius and Dutrieu; we were also familiar with examples of the best procedure in modern inductive science; but the two streams flowed altogether apart in our minds, like two parallel lines never joining nor approaching. The irreconcilability of the two was at once removed, when we had read and mastered the second and third chapters of the Second Book of the *System of Logic;* in which Mr. Mill explains the functions and value of the Syllogism, and the real import of its major premiss."

We do not altogether agree with Mr. Grote in his estimate of this particular doctrine, and on this particular instance we should have much to say if this were the place to say it. But the general description of the "Logic" which Mr. Grote gives is true and admirable. For the first time, an attempt was made to consider together the modern methods of scientific inference and, as Sir John Herschel describes, the ancient methods of scholastic inference as mediæval writers set them forth. The two were never set so completely side by side before, or so fully made to illustrate one another.

Such a book, it will at once be seen, requires a most delicate art of exposition. For these comparisons, the style of a writer must describe not only "meanings" but shades of meaning—not large ideas in the rough, but nice ideas with nice finish. And for this Mr. Mill was well fitted both by genius and by culture. He inherited a philosophical acumen from his father (and, we suspect, from a long line of Scotch and argumentative ancestors), and an education in France had given him the French gift of precise and graceful explanation. That he also caught a little, though only a little, of the tendency to diffuseness of modern French philosophers must, we admit, be acknowledged; but he also gained the literary talents most useful to a comprehensive philosopher—their extreme clearness and their wonderful readability.

In Political Economy there was an eminent field for Mr. Mill's peculiar powers of comparison. There is little which is

absolutely original in his great work; and much of that little is not, we think, of the highest value. The subject had been discussed in detail by several minds of great acuteness and originality, but no writer before Mr. Mill had ever surveyed it as a whole with anything like equal ability; no one had shown with the same fulness the relation which the different parts of the science bore to each other; still less had any one so well explained the relation of this science to other sciences, and to knowledge in general. Since Mr. Mill wrote, there is no excuse for a political economist if his teaching is narrow-minded or pedantic; though, perhaps, from the isolated state of the science, there may have been some before. Mr. Mill had another power, which was almost of as much use to him for his special occupations as his power of writing, he was a most acute and discerning reader. The world hardly gave him credit for this gift before the publication of his book on Sir William Hamilton. But those who have read that book will understand what Mr. Grote means when, in the essay we quoted before, he speaks of Mr. Mill's "unrivalled microscope which detects the minutest breach or incoherence in the tissue of his philosophical reasoning". And he used this great faculty both good-naturedly and conscientiously—he never gave heedless pain to any writer, and never distorted any one's meaning.

In fact, and partly for the reasons we have stated, Mr. Mill's two great treatises have had a unique and immense influence. In Political Economy the writer of these lines has long been in the habit of calling himself the last man of the anti-Mill period. He was just old enough to have acquired a certain knowledge of Ricardo and the other principal writers on Political Economy before Mr. Mill's work was published, and the effect of it has certainly been most remarkable. All students since begin with Mill and go back to all previous writers fresh from the study of him. They see the whole subject with Mr. Mill's eyes. They see in Ricardo and Adam Smith what he told them to see, and it is not easy to induce them to see anything else. Whether it has been altogether good for Political Economy that a single writer should have so monarchical an influence may be argued, but no testimony

can be greater to the ability of that writer and his pre-eminence over his contemporaries. In a wider field the effect of the *Logic* has also been enormous. Half the minds of the younger generation of Englishmen have been greatly coloured by it, and would have been sensibly different if they had not been influenced by it. And there is no other book of English philosophy of which the same can be said, even with a pretext of truth.

A complete estimate of Mr. Mill would include an account of his career in Parliament, and also an account of some peculiarities of his mind, which gave him, considering the dry nature of most of his pursuits and studies, a most singular influence. To very many younger minds he was not so much a political economist as a prophet, not so much a logician as a seer. He had, besides his rare power of arguing and analysing, an equally rare kind of contagious enthusiasm, which influenced a multitude of minds, and made them believe as he did. But an estimate of these peculiarities would be little suited to these pages; nor should we at this moment like to say much which, in our judgment, it would be necessary to say in order to make this estimate just. We have preferred to say that which is plainly true, and which could give no pain to anyone.

## SIR C. DILKE ON THE CIVIL LIST.

(*From "The Economist," 10th January*, 1874.)

A POLITICIAN who, addressing an average English audience, tries to prove a contradiction in terms is pretty sure not to be popular with the educated, and will end by being found out even by the mass of voters, and that is the present position of Sir Charles Dilke. There is a good deal of courage—true courage—as well as conceit in his present attitude, and he is by no means wanting in capacity to maintain an argument, but he is advocating a preposterously illogical proposition. He is, in his last explanation to his constituents, not arguing the true Republican doctrine that the State is the better for a real and not a nominal Head, but is proposing that if the nominal Head must exist he should be deprived of all reverence and cloudy dignity in the eyes of his subjects of all grades. That is, he is protesting not against Kingship, which is perfectly intelligible—though, as we have not his confidence in human nature, we think it unwise—but against that peculiar form of Kingship which is essential to the very life of the existing British Constitution. If it is possible to describe that very complicated but very effective machine in any words, they will be words of this kind. Actual power must rest in a committee of great officers elected by the representatives of the people, and responsible under penalties which, though mild in form, are in reality severe, for the good government of the country, whilst formal power must rest with a great personage who appears to the people to reign, who is an immovable and traditionary head of the Executive, and who, while without initiative or veto, has a permanent right of supervision and remonstrance. Such an office, as we understand

it, must as to effectiveness be somewhat elastic, for an unexperienced and unpopular King might be powerless, while an experienced or popular King might have great and lasting influence; but, in any case, it cannot exist without certain external signs of respect, or a derivation strictly within and yet above the law. An English sovereign, to exist at all, must not be liable to be cross-examined in a Tichborne case, must not be allowed by etiquette to hold controversy with a subject, must not be directly or rudely criticised in public, and must not above all have his or her privacy invaded by Parliament at discretion. He must be a figure, and not a mere person liable to criticism even for vices, unless indeed he forces those vices as George IV. did upon public notice. It is these two great rules, the impersonality and the dignity essential to an English sovereign, which Sir Charles Dilke appears to us determined, for no avowed reason, deliberately to attack. He has proposed twice before, and now proposes again, that the Civil List shall be overhauled, not at the beginning or end of each reign, which is perfectly fair and legitimate, but during each reign, so that the personal tastes, obligations, and ways of the sovereign shall be examined in the face of the world every Session in a way no Premier would endure for half-an-hour. What he says, reduced to ordinary English, is that the Queen is thrifty, saves much money, and ought to explain every year, like a cashier of a branch bank, why she accumulates so much. Would he venture to ask Parliament to make the same inquiry about any Cabinet Minister's allowances, and the way he spent them? Suppose he could allege that one Cabinet Minister wasted money on old china, or that another was a careful economist of his allowances, would he found on those charges a request for an annual commission of inquiry? Yet he does not hesitate to suggest what amounts to that as regards the only great officer of State who cannot bid Parliament mind its own business by a threat of resignation. The Civil List, after payment of certain very heavy specified charges, is the Queen's income for life, as much as is the annual surplus of the Duchy of Lancaster, and any inquiry whatever into the expenditure of that surplus is unfair, as well as injurious, to

the dignity with which, if the Kingship is maintained at all, it must be surrounded. Devoid as our Kings are of real power—the power, for instance, of prosecuting Sir Charles Dilke, as the King of Prussia could—a constant inquiry of that kind would, in five years, be fatal to the throne, by turning the eyes of the whole electorate on an expenditure which they literally could not understand. Every man judges expenditure by a certain standard of his own, and beyond that everything seems waste or pretension; and we venture to assert that if the Queen's private accounts were overhauled in the way the member for Chelsea desires, it is not of economy but lavish waste and extravagance of which the Sovereign would be accused. The electors would no more understand Her Majesty's schedule of travelling expenses than they would understand why a Duke of Devonshire or Northumberland keeps up a house which costs him more than any other single expense, and would weary him to death to live in. But Sir Charles Dilke will assert that that is private waste and this is public waste, and of course this is the true *gravamen* of his charge. One answer to it is a flat denial, the Civil List being subject to inquiry only on a vacancy of the Throne, or on a failure to pay the State charges imposed on it; but our own seems to us still better, namely, that if a throne is to be kept at all under the British system, it must be protected by a certain dignity, stateliness, and grandeur of apparent position to which either large expenditure or extreme seclusion is indispensable. Anybody who violates that dignity is making the constitutional throne—the very key of our system of veiled Republicanism—impossible, without suggesting any better system to fill its place. He may think an unveiled Republic much better, and that is a perfectly defensible standpoint, but he will not reach it by trying to show that the Sovereign ought to have only £60,000 a year. We could have a President, if we wanted one, for £5,000; but if we had, Sir Charles would find it expedient not to demand the particulars of his banker's book.

We do not care one straw about Sir Charles's precedents in this matter—which he has studied very imperfectly, having

missed in the strangest way his own best point, namely, the dates of Lord Brougham's final attack on the Civil List and final withdrawal therefrom—and do not care whether the Georges bribed members or not out of the Civil List. The Queen does not, that is quite certain ; and, short of that, our contention is that if the Sovereign exist at all under our Constitution he must be free of petty surveillance, must be allowed to spend or accumulate his appanages as any other great officer is allowed to spend or accumulate his salary, and must be treated as having a life interest in his own allowances. If they are too much—a proposition quite absurd unless the Monarch is to be poorer than his nobles—or if the arrangements controlling them are too indefinite, let them be revised in the settlement always made for a new reign, or let the people be asked if they prefer a Republican Government. All we object to is a perpetual attempt to destroy the character of the English kingship, without proposing its abolition, by placing the Sovereign under a microscope, beneath which no majesty, even in the English sense, can possibly endure. It must endure if the constitution is to be maintained, and if it is not maintained till the people are educated, say fifty years hence, the British Empire will suffer a shock such as it may not be able to survive. A veiled Republic is the most vivifying of all possible governments for a people accustomed to freedom, but still uneducated, and to give it up because we want to know what the Queen's yacht costs per annum, or why she pensions relatives—that is, because we are impatient, not with the throne, but with its drapery—would be the most unbusiness-like of follies. Sir Charles Dilke pleads that he is no revolutionist, and pleads, we doubt not, with perfect truth—for in his last and very able explanation to his constituents, he shows himself thoroughly conservative of everything provided only it is stripped of dignity. He would overturn nothing except that respect for the symbol of power which alone keeps an uneducated people united, obedient, and patriotic.

## NOT A MIDDLE PARTY BUT A MIDDLE GOVERNMENT.

(*From "The Economist," 17th January*, 1874.)

MR. GRANT DUFF wisely cautioned his hearers at Elgin against believing that a middle party—a party neither Conservative nor Liberal—could be formed in Parliament. He showed that moderate Liberals—one of whom he specially named, and whose mind he analysed—could never belong to such a new party, and could never desert their old one. He might have said the same of the moderate Conservatives; neither in practice would they ever think of such a thing, however often theorists might advise them to do so. The conclusive argument against it is one which superficial theorists, who judge of Parliamentary Government by looking only at Parliament itself, are very apt to overlook. The difficulty is not so much with the House of Commons as with those from whom that House emanates. The constituencies would not hear of such a novelty. In each of them there are two rival electioneering organisations—two sets of antagonist lawyers—and it is only by getting a hold on one of these that any candidate can hope to be elected. Each of these organisations asks of a candidate, in the first place,—Are you for me or against me? And to this plain question it requires an equally plain answer. In London society the idea of a middle party can be understood; but in the country, in the constituencies which are the ultimate source of power, it would be an unintelligible nondescript. It would be only thought to be a fine name for a "cave"; for a union of discontented men who wished to act together.

But though a middle party is impossible, a middle Government—a Government which represents the extreme of neither

party, but the common element between the two parties—is inevitable. Neither party, for a long time at least, will be able to govern in the spirit, or according to the wishes, of its extreme supporters: a Conservative Government will not be such as Mr. Newdegate would wish; a Liberal one must be far short of what Mr. Trevelyan or Sir Charles Dilke would prefer. Any extreme Government would be plainly contrary to the wishes of the nation. On many points it is not easy to say what is the state of feeling of the country; but so much as this at least is evident, it is not violently excited any way. It is not reactionary, it would not undo the work of the Liberals as strong old Tories wish; it is not "advanced Radical," it would not go on at once to new and enormous changes. The spirit of the country is quiet but reasonable; indisposed to sweeping innovations, and equally indisposed to keeping, in the old Tory way, everything which is because it is. The moderate members of both parties represent this spirit very fairly. At a recent election a poor voter is reported to have said that both candidates were very nice gentlemen, but that, for his part, he could not see much difference between them; and this is the simple truth. Between such a Conservatism as Lord Derby's and such a Liberalism as Mr. Cardwell's, who can say that there is any difference much worth mentioning? Though in our politics these "middle men" cannot set up a party of their own, they can at present decisively enjoin their will on both parties.

There is nothing new in such a state of politics. Lord Palmerston's administrations—his second one particularly—were aggravated instances of the type. Lord Palmerston belonged to a different generation; he had outlived his political contemporaries, and ruled over a race who might have been his children or grandchildren. He had no sympathy with any new proposal; to many of those which his followers most urged he had an eager antipathy. We do not expect to return to a Government with such a spirit as this; indeed, that spirit was never unmixed, even in Lord Palmerston's second Government there were Mr. Gladstone's great budgets which effectually broke the monotony and embodied many innovations. But

we are confident that we are returning to some similar Government, to some example more or less mild of the same species. Such Governments are, indeed, the normal and natural Governments of the English people; they embody our particular characteristics—the loathing for extremes and the love of moderation. By stress of events we may occasionally be turned into eager innovators, as at the time of the Reform Act of 1832; and occasionally into bigoted Tories, as for some years after the first French Revolution, but usually we are neither "cold nor hot". We are equally unwilling either to change very much or to change nothing.

Which party should hold office in such a state of politics cannot be easily decided beforehand. The causes which determine between the two vary with the circumstances of the hour, and these cannot be foreseen. It is evident that the Conservatives have a preliminary advantage for there is no great change desired; but this may be counteracted by other causes, as it was all through Lord Palmerston's time. A great pre-eminence of ability on the Liberal side, accompanied by a tried reputation for extreme moderation, may turn the scale. Experience seems to show, however, that, in the long run, chronic causes prevail over intermittent ones. That of the last century is intricate and not easy to bring out, because at that time the favour of the Sovereign—a permanent influence while the same king was on the throne—still counted for much. But of late years it is certain that for some forty years after 1792-93—the period when Mr. Pitt's Ministry became Tory—to 1832, the Conservatives were continuously in power, with only one slight break; and that for the next forty years, from 1832 to the present time, the Liberals have been continuously in power, with very slight intermissions. The party which suits the nation best tends on that account to be in office, and every hour that it is there tends to keep it there, for the possession of power teaches a party how to use power, and the long non-possession of it makes one raw and awkward in the handling of it. A deficiency of official skill was a perpetual reproach to the Whigs about 1832, as a similar deficiency is to the Tories now.

The retention of office by the Liberals for the visible future seems a good deal to depend on its retention for the moment. If they once let the Conservatives into office it will not be easy to turn them out again; at least, there is no measure, such as the Reform Bill used to be, which the nation wishes—nominally or really—but which Conservatives will not accept, and on which the Liberals can unite to displace them. The only changes in that direction now proposed are the identification of the county with the town franchise, and the equalisation, more or less near, of the electoral districts. And these, after some degree of coy reluctance, the Conservatives will probably be ready to "consider" and accept. Their effect would be very favourable to the Conservatives, for it would strengthen the voting force of the rural population, which is Conservative, and weaken that of the urban, which may be Liberal. A political party rarely refuses to accept from its adversaries a Shibboleth which will be beneficial to it as well as injurious to them. A measure on which to turn the Tories out of office, if they are once let in, will nowadays not be found easily.

We have endeavoured to put aside our own predilections for the time, and to sketch the chances of party politics as accurately and as fairly as we can. But there is one most cheerful consideration above party. After the great change of 1867—after the extension of the suffrage, and after the ballot—it might have been feared that we should be discussing questions far more dangerous and delicate. It *was* apprehended that the working classes would take all the decisions to themselves—would combine as a class and legislate for their class interests, or what they thought such. But as yet we see nothing of the sort. The most captivating thing which a candidate can say now is, that he is for the abolition of the income tax, which the working men have never paid and never can. The voters by household suffrage seem to act, from miscellaneous causes, which at times we cannot explain, much like the old £10 householders; they do not combine for their own ends or against the higher classes. In many respects the working of recent changes has not been beneficial.

At no time, perhaps, were local influences so powerful, or petty ones, or the influence of money; at none was the difficulty so great of introducing *mind* into Parliament; but on the cardinal point, and that most feared of all, the effect of the new laws, as yet at least, is less than either friends or enemies expected. In the main things go on much as before. The predominance is as yet where it ought to be, in the hands of leisure, of property, and of intelligence; the poor and ignorant masses have not hitherto combined to displace them.

## THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF BECOMING A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

(*From "The Economist," 7th February*, 1874.)

DURING the last fortnight there has been more discussion about going into Parliament than about anything else, and there is a good deal of difference of opinion about it. On the one hand, the great majority, holding the traditional opinion, say that a seat in Parliament is the natural reward of ability, and the best thing that can happen to any Englishman; on the other hand, an intellectual minority, mainly though not wholly to be found in London, say that Parliament is mostly composed of dull, rich men, that it is fit for such and only such, that an intellectual man would only waste his mind there, that he should keep to his own pursuits—to literature, or science, or philosophy—and leave Parliament to others. Let us try and see what is the truth of this matter; what a man gains and what he loses.

There is no doubt that the traditional idea rests upon an abolished fact. It is thought that going into Parliament is a good way of making money. And it is true that sixty years ago, or still more a hundred, it was possible for a young man who started with very small means, but who had available brains, and who played his game keenly, to arrive at considerable wealth. There were then many sinecure places of fair amount which could be combined together till they came to a very good income indeed, and which could be settled in remainder and reversion so as to make a comfortable provision for children. The chance of obtaining these places was always most uncertain, and the career was very precarious—it was never considered a reliable calling by sound people.

Still there was such a career, and we could run over the names of those who made money in it. But now there is no longer any such career. The sinecure places upon which it was based have been abolished. If a man of ability wishes to make money he had better go anywhere else than into Parliament, for there is much more to be spent than made there.

The real gains at the present, as they affect most men, are three. First, a man gains far more social standing, as it is called, by going into Parliament than he can gain in any other way. "I wrote books," said a politician of the last generation, "and I was nobody; I made speeches and I was nobody; I got into Parliament and I was somebody." There is a foolish way of depreciating such feelings; they are called in literature "low and snobbish"; but they are very powerful and deep-seated notwithstanding. Mankind are not solitary theorists; they are practical and social beings, dependent for much of their happiness on the respect and goodwill of one another. The wish "to have worship from those with whom you sit at meat" is an inseparable part of our present human nature. It is possible to purify and elevate it; it is not possible to eradicate or annihilate it. As long as English society considers a seat in Parliament a great social prize, a seat there will, by the mass of Englishmen, be looked for and coveted as such. And it is very natural that it should be so regarded as such a prize—it is far more comprehensible to most people than eminence in science or literature. A common person, who reads little, has but very little notion what the books of the day are about. He thinks but little of them, and does not much understand them when he does think. But no one can help thinking of Parliament; no one can help knowing, more or less, what is done there, and who are the famous men there. To take part in the government of the country—to be a member of the Assembly which rules the country—is a distinction much more intelligible to most people than to have written a book or made a discovery in optics; and it is also a more indisputable distinction. There are often two opinions about

science, and almost always two about literature. Discoveries are said to be not discoveries but mistakes; books not to be good writing, for which the author should be admired, but bad, for which he should be despised. But about Parliament there is no doubt at all; whether a man is or is not a member of the House of Commons is a plain matter of fact. It is an indisputable mark of comprehensible merit, while books and scientific theories are only disputable claims to an incomprehensible one.

The fact that the most influential part of the Cabinet—of the Board of National Directors, as we may call it—is taken from the House of Commons, raises the character of the whole. To be a member of that board is the greatest distinction among common Englishmen. Everyone respects the few members of that small body which decides whether there shall be peace or war; what shall be and what shall not be our home policy. The House out of which they are chosen shares the distinction. A member of Parliament is, at any rate, eligible for the Cabinet, while no one else is eligible. And the Cabinet and the whole Government of England are still so closely connected with the House of Lords and the Crown, that even a distant connection with them—the merely being in Parliament—is fondly respected by simple people because it seems to imply a vicinity to the aristocracy and an approximation to the Throne.

Secondly, a member of Parliament has the means of acquiring much valuable knowledge which it is difficult to learn in other ways at all, and which can in no other way be learnt so easily and perfectly. The working of the great machine of Parliament can be far better investigated by persons in Parliament than by any one else; they have a first-hand knowledge of much which to others is only matter of report; they have a just confidence in the use of their knowledge which others have not; they can feel that it is complete, and that they know all about the matter; whereas those who have only second-hand knowledge feel, in this case as in all others, that there may be something of which they have never heard and of which they have no idea. Members

of the House see the Parliamentary machine itself; literary people only judge of it, as it were, by plates and description. On the actual working of the machine at any particular time this is particularly important; a careful observer can, by steady comparison, educe certain general rules for which he has solid reasons, and in which he has confidence; but in the application of those rules to a particular case he must always feel uncertainty. There is a vast mass of political knowledge which is at all times most important, and which no reading, no newspapers, can supply them with. Our newspapers are, and are proud that they are, distinguished by an absence of personality; they do not lift the veil of private life; they do not tell the inner weakness of public men or the details of their "habit as they live," and there can be no greater merit in the papers or blessing to the public. An incessant press dealing with real personalities would sicken its readers, and would drive sensitive men from public life. But, nevertheless, personality is a most important element in politics; political business, like all other, is not transacted by machines, but by living and breathing men, of various and generally strong characters, of various and often strong passions. Unless you know something of these passions and these characters you are continually at fault. The knowledge of public men, so freely given by newspapers, is a knowledge of masks rather than realities—of actors as they seem on the stage, rather than of those actors as they really are. Something may be learned out of Parliament to remedy this, but an able and active member can see, with ease and certainty, five times as much as can be gathered in any way. And this personality, important as it is, is not the only appropriate knowledge of members of Parliament, perhaps not even the most valuable. If they are intelligent, they can tell what is really practicable far better than any one else, for they can better know the feeling of the House of Commons, which is the immediate authority, and of the constituencies, which is the ultimate authority. Each member can see by his own constituency what the ordinary British elector thinks of things, and he has before him daily what the ordinary member of Parliament

thinks of them. No other persons can approach him in this, if he uses his advantages well. What *ought* to be done can often be sufficiently seen by persons not in Parliament, but the final problem of practice, what *can* be done, is not often fully seen except by those who are there.

Lastly, members of Parliament have a certain amount of power; not indeed enough—indeed not of the sort to satisfy men of eager minds and despotic temperament—but still considerable. They can take part in the business of legislation; if they have any sort of real knowledge, and any kind of regular industry, they can easily find work which will be in itself valuable, and which they will be respected for doing by those around them. If they aspire to and obtain office, they have of course much more power. No doubt it is very rarely even then of the sort which the tyrannical disposition, the disposition which most longs for power, most likes. An English statesman can only in very rare cases impose on others original plans of his own. His work is either to co-operate in committee with other men, or to embody in legal form the ideas of other men. Even in administration he has to cope with many obstacles, and has to consult with and consider many other minds. Still this power, even so lessened and so defined, is a sufficient object of a wise ambition. To moderate people it is indeed more desirable than greater and more solitary power; such persons are rarely anxious to impose on others large schemes of their own, and they have usually more confidence in plans which have been assented to and, so to say, verified by several other minds, than those which are solely due to, and have only been considered by, themselves. There is much power to be obtained by an English statesman, and considerable power to be got by going into Parliament, though for the most part it is a power of co-operation and of adaptation, not of exclusive origination or sole despotism.

But these advantages are obtained by members of Parliament at a very high price—first in the lowest kind of price—for, a rare exception or two apart, they have to pay in money, in one way and another, a considerable sum. What with the

cost of elections, the cost of making yourself popular in a constituency, the cost of living in London, and the cost of society, a considerable sum annually runs away. Except with men of peculiar gifts, or peculiar circumstances, those who endeavour to lead a Parliamentary life without paying this price in money will probably find that they have spent more than they wish without obtaining the life which they desire. They will have economised enough to lose them their constituency, but not enough to prevent their having expended more than they meant, and, perhaps, more than they can afford. And besides the price in money, an active member of Parliament has to pay a much heavier one in time and labour. There is no occupation which absorbs men so much as politics—none at least in which there is so little money to be earned. Scarcely any one who has ever been in Parliament and who has lost his seat is happy till he gets back. But the time so spent and the fatigue so incurred are very great. Men disposed to idle can idle in Parliament as well as anywhere else; but then they might just as well be anywhere else. Men who wish to get something special out of Parliament—something which they would not have if they were not in it—will find that they are involved in a vortex of late hours, of long committees, of long listening to others, of long waitings to speak themselves without being able. Neither the instruction given by being in Parliament nor the power are to be obtained at less cost. Nor is this the worst. An influential member of Parliament has not only to pay much money to become such, and to give time and labour, he has also to sacrifice his mind too—at least all the characteristic part of it, that which is original and most his own. And this is in the nature of things. If you want to represent a constituency, you must not go down to them and say, "See, I have all these new ideas, of which you have no notion: these new plans, which you must learn and study —all this new knowledge, of which neither you nor your fathers ever heard". If you hint at anything like this you will be rejected at once. But, on the contrary, you must say what they think only perhaps a little better than they could say it; advocate the schemes they wish advocated; be zealous for the

party's tradition which you and they have in common. The cleverer you can be in doing this, the more you can please them with their own thoughts and make them happy with their own inventions, the better they will like you. But (exceptions apart) you must not try to teach them. They want a representative, not a tutor; a man who will vote as they wish, not one who will teach them what they ought to wish for. This is the real cause of the deluge of commonplace that has lately filled the newspapers. In the million election speeches which have been made it may be doubted if there have been five original thoughts; even the best, as a rule, have only been old tunes admirably played. There is plenty of originality in England if it would pay to be original. But at an election it does not; you will only puzzle your constituency by saying what they do not understand, and offend them by seeming to think that you are wiser than they are. "We never heard of such a thing in all our lives before," they will say, and will think it a sufficient objection to the truth of an idea or the sufficiency of a plan. A man who wants to represent others must be content to seem to be as they are, and it will be better for him if he is as they are. A man who tries to enter Parliament must be content to utter common thoughts, and to bind himself to the formularies of common creeds, or he will not succeed in his candidature. And to some minds there is no necessity more vexing or more intolerable.

We have made at length this comparison of advantages and disadvantages, because it goes far to explain the composition of the new Parliament. It explains why so many people are so anxious to go into Parliament, and how much of sensible commonplace there appears to be in them, how little of anything higher.

## THE WOMEN'S DEGREES.

(*From "The Economist," 23rd May*, 1874.)

THERE is something a little ludicrous in the dismay with which the resolution carried in the Convocation of the University of London last Tuesday week—that it is desirable to open the degrees of that University to women—has been received by some sections of the press. One would suppose by what one reads that what the University had done was to force women into duties for which they are totally unfitted, and into the midst of the conflicts of public life. In point of fact, we may assume that if the Senate concur with the Convocation, and succeed in obtaining a new Charter which will enable them to admit women to degrees, they will take very careful precautions neither to fix the age at which women are admissible too low, nor to encourage women to compete directly with men for the scholarships or other endowments which may be placed at the disposal of the new candidates. And when all is done, the result will probably be that where men come in hundreds to the University for its degrees, women will come, for a considerable period of time, in only twos or threes; and that of those who thus come by twos and threes, very few will be induced by their intellectual success to press into the crush of practical life. Intellectual attainments appear to be regarded by ordinary writers as stimulants to action. We apprehend that it is a truer view of them to regard them as in a very considerable degree hindrances to action. None are so ready to rush into the strife as those who do not know the terrible complexity of the conditions; none are so clear in their conclusions as those who are kept artificially ignorant of the perplexities and con-

tradictions by which the questions are beset. We apprehend that the actual effect of opening the London degrees to women will be but small in any way at first, and that the greater part of that small effect will probably be seen in opening the minds of a few enterprising and able women, who would otherwise be very likely to take up rash movements, to the many reasons for delay of judgment. Such have been the actual results of high education, for instance, on one of the ablest among the practical women of the present generation, Mrs. Garrett Anderson. On the School Board of London she was one of the great advocates of the policy of moderation. In the controversy as to the Contagious Diseases Act, her letter did more to paralyse the hasty and violent agitators of her own sex than all the replies of the physicians. In the discussion which has recently taken place, as to the physical danger of putting too early a strain on women's brains, her reply to Dr. Maudsley was characterised by as much caution and conservatism (of a good kind) as it was by acuteness and sagacity. We believe that no women are so little likely to be forward and presumptuous as those who have received an education above their fellows. Instead of encouraging them to pass into conflicts for which they are not fitted, it will, we believe, tend to a very remarkable degree to put a drag on that excitable and dangerous feminine enthusiasm which is so marked a feature of our time, not because the leaders are educated, but because they are uneducated.

Of course we do not mean that a higher education will not qualify the women who gain it to do much that at present they cannot do; nor that many of the new occupations for which they will be so qualified will not be occupations now monopolised by men. That is a result not only to be expected, but to be greatly desired. One obvious illustration is certain special spheres of medicine, which are already, in spite of very great physiological ignorance, occupied in large degree by women—the hospital nursing and midwifery. Every one knows that without the trained nurses and the midwives, by whom the surgeons and physicians are so greatly assisted, it would be exceedingly difficult to carry on the medical system

of this country. Thus it is perfectly obvious that where from natural causes women have, as it were, been forced into a profession without the proper knowledge for perfect efficiency, it is simple injustice to debar them from attaining not only the knowledge, but the evidence of possessing the knowledge which will make them fully efficient. There are other departments of the medical profession for which they are particularly well fitted, especially the treatment of all women's and children's diseases; but nothing would be more culpable than to allow them to deal with such cases without the more complete and thorough medical education in all departments which is deemed requisite for men. Again, there are no doubt plenty of departments of life for which the most economical division of labour would point out sensible women with a certain amount of scientific training as peculiarly well fitted. They are already acknowledged to be admirable telegraphic operators. We believe that they might well become equally admirable analytic chemists and apothecaries, without even so much obtrusion into the competitive life of the world as they encounter in the capacity of dressmakers and milliners. It seems to us the wildest idea conceivable that because women are educated, and afford adequate evidences of a good education, they will be more likely to lose their feminine qualities than they are in their present condition of relative ignorance. Is it ignorance which causes feminine grace, or, rather, which prevents it? No doubt an additional weapon is always an advantage in the battle of life, and women with knowledge will be able to take posts which they could not pretend to take without knowledge. Yet why should not such posts be rather more instead of less becoming to them as women, than those into which they are, as it were, *forced* by their deficiency in knowledge. Open a wide field of choice, and the reasonable expectation will be that there will be more instead of less fitness in the choice actually made. It is not as if it were even plausible to assert that any feminine quality will be rubbed off in the course of education. It may be in some sense a characteristic of a woman hardly to realise what a "law of nature," for instance, means, because so few of them

have ever been taught. But can any sensible man say that it adds to any feminine delicacy or power not to know what a law of nature really means? Can anyone suppose for a moment that the qualities usually called feminine gain anything by the absence of that kind of knowledge? What is specially attractive in the feminine character is a certain readiness of sympathy and quickness of perception; that, instead of being injured by education, will very probably be heightened by it. But, at all events, it is worth very little if it does not penetrate all education, and mould the effect of education with its own impress. This certainly is what it is reasonable to expect, and not the amazing result which the extraordinary credulity of the extreme Conservatives appears to anticipate—that women, by sharing a good deal of man's knowledge, will come to share the peculiarities of the masculine character. You might almost as well expect men of totally different character and bent, to be assimilated to each other by pursuing the same studies. As we all know, what really happens in the case of education, as in the case of food, is this—that the man assimilates what his constitution fits him to assimilate; and as each constitution is different, the result of administering the same nourishment, whether to different minds or different bodies, is different too.

We sincerely trust that the University of London will go forward in the course so wisely begun, and that the result may be a small but valuable addition to the powers and interests of women, and act advantageously on the social life of the day. The frivolity of women is one of the greatest causes of vice and frivolity in men. If we can but have a generation of women somewhat less dull, and somewhat less inclined to devote themselves to silly occupations, we hope that not only their children but their husbands and brothers will be the gainers.

## MR. GLADSTONE ON RITUALISM.

(*From "The Economist," 3rd October*, 1874.)

WE hear it said "that Mr. Gladstone ought not to write on Ritualism; that he ought to keep his pen quiet; that the head of a great party is a kind of trustee for that party, and that he should primarily consider its interest in all which he says and in all which he writes. Particularly he ought not as a political leader to take up an unpopular cause out of the sphere of politics." Whether ritualism is out of the sphere of politics may, we think, be denied, but further than that, if the Liberal party think that Mr. Gladstone will think of their immediate interest in that way, a great experience goes to show that they have mistaken their man. Mr. Gladstone has never considered *his own* interest in that way. He has always been doing something contrary to his immediate interest. Every one who is conversant with the political talk of the last twenty or twenty-five years must have heard a hundred times—"Gladstone is done for; Gladstone never can recover from this again; he is his own worst enemy; no one but himself could have done himself fatal harm, and now he has himself done it". But, in fact, within a month after each of the hundred fatal failures Mr. Gladstone has arisen again and is just where he was before. He has made some great speech or proposed some great measure which has caused everything which was objected to to be forgotten. Every public man wins or loses by the balance which there is in his favour, but there are two ways of gaining that balance. Some statesmen have almost nothing put to their debit, so that all which they do, be it ever so little, goes with only slight deduction to their credit; others have a good deal put to their debit, but then, on the other hand,

an immense sum is every now and then paid to their credit. Mr. Gladstone is of the latter class; he "turns over," as we should say in the City, "a very large amount," and at the end of the year the balance to his advantage is most considerable, after charging him with all that he ought to be charged with.

We may seem to imply that we do not think that the publishing of Mr. Gladstone's essay on *Ritualism* was the wisest of his public acts, and we own we do not think so. Of course you would never have induced by any offer steady or regular English statesmen, such men as Lord Cardwell or Lord Derby, to put their names at such a time to, or to write such a paper, but we should not have thought that conclusive. As we have explained, Mr. Gladstone is not a man who ever can or ever will run in the common groove. Our objection is to the substance of the paper, because we think it improperly changes the issue and diverts attention from the point to which it is most expedient that it should be directed.

Mr. Gladstone says, and very truly, that there has been in all religious communities a great reaction in favour of suitable ceremonial of late years; that in all the odd and bleak style of former years is getting more out of fashion; that in all the "outward and visible" tends to assume a place which previous generations would certainly have refused to it, and which probably they would have been shocked at its even claiming. Mr. Gladstone's instances do not go beyond the body of orthodox persons—Dissenters or Church people. But the reaction in favour of the "outward and visible" went much wider. We could name a Unitarian chapel so finely built and with so much of ecclesiastical expression that a High Churchman who saw it uttered "Confound their impudence." Mr. Gladstone could have insisted on nothing more justly than on the augmented respect now paid in almost all sects to the exterior symbol.

But this does not come to the main point. If the outcry were really against an increased respect for the outward and visible, it ought to extend to all sects, for in all of them that respect for the outward and visible is to be seen more or less.

But, as we are aware, this is not so. It is only one kind of "symbol" which is execrated; only one sect in which the dislike is held; only one kind of "Ritualism" which people ever think of or Parliament ever discusses. Nor is it to the purpose to insist, as Mr. Gladstone does with much truth and much ingenuity, on the want of artistic sense in Englishmen, and their unfitness to find good outward symbols for inward things; for this unfitness is common to all sects and classes, and if it were the source of the present cry, that cry would pervade all sects, and attack all additional symbols and all new forms of ceremonies. But, as we know, that cry does nothing of the sort; its object is limited to one set of persons and to one kind of ceremonial. There must be something special in this.

There *is* something special. It is true that all kinds of religion tend to form to themselves a ritual; but it is not true that all have that tendency equally—some have it much more than others. Those which have it most are those which are based most on the sacramental principle. We cannot go fully into the reasons for this. Theological disquisition is not suitable to these pages; but roughly we may put the matter in this way. The essence of a "sacrament" is that the officiating person performs an invisible supernatural act; he changes the elements of bread and wine into something which is no longer bread and wine; he gives the mere water of baptism a supernatural efficiency which does not belong to it in reality. The essence, the leading and cardinal point of religions based on this principle, is the public working of an imperceptible but efficacious miracle. The special characteristic of other kinds of worship is that something is said or felt or believed, but here that characteristic is something done. Inevitably this great act tends to surround itself with other minor acts. A worship of prayer and preaching may be content with prayer and preaching, but a worship of supernatural acts tends naturally to surround itself with preparatory natural acts; it jars human nature to begin with so great a thing, it requires to be introduced by some minor thing. As a matter of experience sacramental churches have been churches of

ceremonial ; the churches which have completely rejected the sacramental principle have been those in which the worship has been the plainest and the ritual the least. And the theory of human nature would lead us to expect that it would be so.

In one of his most remarkable books the greatest Roman Catholic writer of this age describes the point forcibly. He introduces a recent convert as saying :—"I could attend masses for ever, and not be tired. It is not a mere form of words, it is a great action, the greatest action that can be on earth. It is not the invocation merely, but, if I dare use the word, the evocation of the Eternal. He becomes present on the altar in flesh and blood, before whom angels bow and devils tremble. This is that awful event which is the scope, and is the interpretation of every part of the solemnity. Words are necessary, but as means, not as ends ; they are not mere addresses to the throne of grace, they are instruments of what is far higher, of consecration, of sacrifice." Minds in this temper try to procure for themselves the most striking ceremonial which they can procure ; they endeavour to accompany the invisible drama with a visible drama as lofty, as exciting, and as little inappropriate as they can.

The moment that we understand that Ritualism is the natural accompaniment of this kind of religion we also understand why the English dislike Ritualism, for they dislike this form of religion—dislike it more than they dislike any other ; "Popery" is the best-known instance and the most striking development of it, and the English people hate "Popery". The idea of such a kind of worship besides seems alien to them, and to run counter to their instincts. The idea of an invisible supernatural act performed close to them startles them, shocks them, and seems, as they say, "carrying things to an extreme". And they would not like it any the better, but much the worse, because the power of performing so great an act, if once believed and admitted, inevitably gives to those who perform it diffused prestige and influence ; this doctrine establishes a priesthood in the world, and the English people hate a priesthood. The most striking Ritualism is accordingly hated in

England, because the species of religion which most tends to be strikingly Ritualistic is equally hated.

We should not have thought it necessary to write on a subject far from those most usual to us if we had not thought that the matter was very serious to us. In so saying, we give of course no opinion on the truth or falsity of any theological doctrine. Ours are not columns in which such topics can be spoken of. We mean that the political consequences of "Ritualism," in the sense in which we have explained it, and in the manner in which in truth it arises in the real world, are very serious. It endangers the establishment of the Church in England, both if it retains within its limits those who sympathise with Ritualism and if it expels them. If it retains them it is in danger, because it identifies itself with a kind of religion which the English people dislike exceedingly and which they fear exceedingly. The connection between the Church and the State in England may easily be severed if that Church gives a home to those whom the common feeling of the nation particularly dislikes and at whom it is particularly irritated. On the other hand, if the Church expels those who sympathise in this movement and those who take part in it, it runs into danger because it narrows its boundaries; because it loses the support of an eager and earnest body; because no one can know how deeply notions akin to this permeate society, and how many may be affected by measures directed against them; and because, owing to many circumstances, the same class of men no longer enter the Church that used to do so, so that she has to be content with inferiors; and because, therefore, any new exclusion would be the diminution of a class already diminished, and the weakening of a power already impaired. Either way, the result to the Establishment is important.

We are grateful to Mr. Gladstone for what he has given us, but we own we think he ought to have done less or more. Either he ought not to have written on a subject on which he was sure to offend many, or he ought to have grappled with that subject in its practical aspect, and upon the side on which, far more than any other, it influences our politics.

## THE PREMIERSHIP.

(*From "The Economist," 2nd January*, 1875.)

EVERY one must rejoice at the authoritative announcement by Sir Stafford Northcote that Mr. Disraeli was very much better, and that in consequence he would be able to begin the Session with his usual spirit. Literary men take an especial interest in the matter; Mr. Disraeli is the one Premier of England who has been distinctively and characteristically a literary man. Others may have written books, but they did not begin by writing books, and they did not put the best of themselves into their books; but Mr. Disraeli was an author before he was anything else, and there is a volatile and acute essence in his best writings which will enable posterity to estimate, perhaps, his most characteristic quality. Politics apart, all literary men have a secret wish that the premiership of their one representative shall be long. But these wishes must not blind us to plain facts. There is no doubt that Mr. Disraeli's late attack was long and trying; that it may not improbably be succeeded by another; that last session he was often not vigorous; that instead of being strengthened by an autumn holiday he was weakened by an autumn illness. The case is the more serious because Mr. Disraeli's life has not been spent in harness, and because office and its incessant cares are new to him. He has always been an observing and thinking, and, in his way, an industrious man. But his work has been for the most part optional work, not involving much anxiety; he has not been hardened by the habit of years to the daily toil of necessary action; he has known less than most politicians of what Lord Macaulay called "the grinding, the invidious, the closely-watched slavery, which is marked by the name of power".

We must consider what the work of the Premier is. The most authentic description (though by no means a complete one) was that given by Sir R. Peel in 1850: "Take the case of the Prime Minister. You must presume that he reads every important despatch from every foreign Court. He cannot consult with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and exercise the influence which he ought to have with respect to the conduct of foreign affairs, unless he be master of everything of real importance passing in that department. It is the same with respect to other departments, India, for instance; how can the Prime Minister be able to judge of the course of policy with regard to India unless he be cognisant of all the current important correspondence? In the case of Ireland and the Home Department, it is the same. Then the Prime Minister has the patronage of the Crown to exercise, which you say, and justly say, is of so much importance and of such value; he has to make inquiries into the qualifications of the persons who are candidates; he has to conduct the whole of the communications with the Sovereign; he has to write, probably with his own hand, the letters in reply to all persons of station who address themselves to him; he has to receive deputations on public business; during the sitting of Parliament he is expected to attend six or seven hours a day, while Parliament is sitting, for four or five days in the week; at least, he is blamed if he is absent."

And though in some respects the work of a Prime Minister has perhaps been somewhat altered since then, probably now he would scarcely be expected to overlook—so much as Sir R. Peel thought necessary—such a department as India. But on the whole his work has rather increased than diminished. Sir R. Peel explained that it had increased between 1830 and 1850. He was asked by Cobden: "You alluded to the increased labour to which the Ministers are subject at the present time, as compared with the middle and end of the last century, but do you not think that in all classes of the community there is much more active and continuous labour in all pursuits than there was at that time?" And he answers: "There probably is, but that activity reacts, I think, upon the

duties of the Minister; that tendency to increased labour throughout all classes adds to the public business; it would be important that the Committee should ascertain the progressive increase of business in each department, caused by a combination of many circumstances. Probably the penny post has had its influence. There is a greater disposition to write to Ministers; to send suggestions; and it is very useful that there should be that free voluntary communication upon all matters of public concern; but it greatly increases the business of the public offices."

And this is a process which has gone on augmenting from 1850 till now, till it must make the miscellaneous work of a Prime Minister most teasing and vexing. And independently of that, and considering only the principal points, if we consider what it must be to lead the House of Commons; to consult with, and often control, colleagues; to be chairman of the Cabinet; to compose the quarrels of the Cabinet; to write to the Queen in the careful, delicate way necessary in dealing with a superior; to dispense the most critical patronage; to form some kind of idea of the legislative plans proposed and contemplated—we shall wonder how any man can be equal to so much. And even this is scarcely all, for the Prime Minister is at the head of our business, and, like every head of a business, he ought to have mind in reserve. He must be able to take a fresh view of new contingencies, and keep an animated curiosity as to coming events. If he suffer himself to be involved in minutiæ, some great change in the world, some Franco-German war, may break out, like a thief in the night, and if he has no elastic thought and no spare energy, he may make the worst errors. A great Premier must add the vivacity of an idle man to the assiduity of a very laborious one.

We cannot but doubt how long Mr. Disraeli's frame can stand such fatigues as these. The strongest man of business might well shrink from them; and he has never been a man of business, and is not now strong. There are, undoubtedly, those who say, "Oh, you need not mind, Dizzy takes things very easily. He will pull along very well." But we do not

believe that Mr. Disraeli would neglect any matter which he considered of national importance. In his way he was a singularly conscientious leader of Opposition. No doubt there is much of Parliamentary life which he regards as a mere game, which he thinks may go anyhow without hurting the nation, and this part he manipulated as he thought best for his party and for himself. But on other parts of politics—on the larger issues of foreign policy especially—Mr. Disraeli has for many years shown an amount of self-restraint and of conscientiousness which men professedly much more scrupulous might well envy. During the very many years in which he led the Opposition, it would be hard to find even a single instance in which he hurtfully hampered Government on a great international question. And in many cases—particularly throughout the American civil war, and the other day on the Geneva arbitration—he not only did not harass the Government himself, when it would have been easy to do so, and when it would have been a party advantage, but also held back his followers, whose sympathies were eager and whose passions awakened. A statesman who has acted with so much conscience in the irresponsible regions of Opposition, is not likely to lose much of it in the more congenial region of office. We may be sure that there is much of the work of a Prime Minister which Mr. Disraeli would never neglect, and to which he would apply the whole of his discriminating observation and delicate thinking. There is, no doubt, a sort of cant of indifference about him, but so there was about Lord Melbourne, who is now known to have been a most thinking, careful Minister, and whose brain was found after death to show the signs usually indicative of habitual anxiety. So far from expecting Mr. Disraeli to shield himself from the higher responsibilities by constant neglect, we cannot but fear that he impairs a finely-adjusted intellect and a feeble frame by too much application to them.

What will be the effect on the Government of any calamity to its head it would be very premature to discuss. On the one side it may be said that the main part of his work is done; that Mr. Disraeli has "educated" his party; that the questions

on which the moderate part of them differ from moderate Liberals are few and small; that there is no occasion and no room now for the adroit tactics which he used to practice while his party was in a minority; that now that they are in a majority the time is come for a more plain and straightforward policy, which others may be as well able as he would be to practice, and more willing. But, on the other hand, without Mr. Disraeli this Ministry, it has been justly said, would be "Quarter Sessions all over". All the other leaders of the Ministry (Lord Cairns excepted) belong exactly to the class from whom chairmen of Quarter Sessions are taken, and many of them have been such. But this class, though a most respectable, is by no means the quickest, the keenest, or the most experienced in business to be found in English society; and it is a serious thing to commit the fate of the country to a Cabinet composed of them and them only. There is known, too, to be a part of the Cabinet not indisposed to return to some old Tory maxims which the country would not endure for a moment. The Conservative party have, too, been out of office so much for so many years that we really cannot say of its leaders whether they have the capacity and the courage required for great affairs. We may well wish for the health of Mr. Disraeli, for when he goes we shall be governed by an "unknown quantity".

## MR. GLADSTONE'S RESIGNATION.

(*From "The Economist," 16th January*, 1875.)

In one respect Mr. Gladstone is unique. Many statesmen have written books in retirement, and some have ostentatiously commended it. But ordinarily those books are tame and those commendations forced. Now that they feel no longer the excitement of the Senate or of office all else seems tasteless to them, and you can trace that languor in every phrase they utter. But no one can say this of Mr. Gladstone. His writings in retirement may or may not be too many; they may or may not be models of style; but no one can say that they do not show the keenest interest in their subjects. If he writes in the *Quarterly*, you wonder at the unusual vigour of the anonymous contributor; if he writes on the "Vatican Decrees," you admire the minute research and the zeal of disputation which no divine can surpass. In Homeric criticism his eagerness is almost greater; it has long been said of him that he "cared as much about the sons of Priam as if they had votes on a division"; and, in fact, he can pursue, with elastic energy, inquiries which most bookworms would call tedious. And in all this exceptional earnestness there is not a vestige of affectation. It is the simple expression of an intense nature, which singular to say is both variable and concentrated, which pours itself in a hundred pursuits, but which for the time being is absorbed in each.

This is the real explanation of Mr. Gladstone's resignation. He can withdraw into comparative retirement, because he can be absorbingly occupied in retirement. If he hears from a distance the din of Parliamentary battle, he is not overpowered with melancholy musing; his compensations are at hand; his study is no place of calm to him, for it is alive with "hot thought" and rings with controversies for which he cares.

That Mr. Gladstone has judged wisely for himself in resigning the leadership of the Liberal party we cannot doubt. There can be little pleasure in leading that party in its present state, and there must be much vexation. It will be impossible to please everybody, and easy not to please anybody. The toil of attending Parliament merely to "watch the proceedings"; to sit opposite to a Government in anxious hope that it may make some mistake, and with little to say if it does not; to detect errors in figures and poke amendments into clauses,—is an excellent training for young members, but a dismal employment for a finished statesman. In Mr. Gladstone's case it would be particularly melancholy, for it would be a striking contrast to his own Government. After just having achieved much of which even those who question the policy do not doubt the greatness, it would be pitiable to be occupied for session after session in framing minute criticism on measures of which those who approve the object cannot deny the mediocrity.

The task would be the less pleasing because it is a kind of Parliamentary work, probably the only kind, for which Mr. Gladstone is not well fitted. In framing or explaining great measures, in great replies—in short, in all first-class combats—he is without a rival in our time; Lord Russell, no partial judge, seems to think, without a rival during his immense Parliamentary experience. But exactly the qualities which fit Mr. Gladstone for these great combats unfit him for much small work. He is not a man to hold, as the lawyers say, a "watching brief". The best requisites for that task are—first, taciturnity, so as not to be hurried into premature objections; and next, a light way of handling small objections, so as not to make too much, and yet to make enough of them. But no one would praise Mr. Gladstone for these gifts; he has greater ones, but he has not these.

If anything could incline a statesman in Mr. Gladstone's place to resign the leadership of the Liberal party, we should say that it would be the speeches which have been made during the recess by Liberal members. At first sight these speeches all look complimentary, for they are unanimous in

professions of allegiance; but when carefully examined their purport is less pleasing, for most of the speakers expect their fealty to be recompensed, and to be recompensed by the achievement of an impossible task. The Liberal party is, by admission, divided: what some wish others reject; what some think an indispensable good others think an irreparable calamity. And many expect Mr. Gladstone to discover the word of the enigma—the measure which is to bring them together. But he cannot do so at this moment, nor can anyone else. Such measures must "grow"; they cannot be made. A new race of ideas must be formed. Long controversies and many agitations will be necessary before the Liberal party will be united upon a single plan, and before the nation will be prepared to accept it of them.

For himself, therefore, as we believe, Mr. Gladstone has judged wisely. What will be the effect of that decision on the Liberal party is another question. For the moment it will, we cannot doubt, be unfavourable. In the first place the party will lose the enormous advantage of being led by a man of genius. Indeed it seems as if genius would soon be banished from practical statesmanship. If anything should happen to the present Prime Minister, and if Mr. Gladstone perseveres in retiring, two great parties in the State will be left with what in the cotton market would be called "best middling" statesmen and with no others. And we believe that the effect will be to make politics as a study less elevating and less instructive to the English people than they have been used to find it. The spectacle of the contentions of first-rate men on subjects which the many care for is the best and almost the only way of bringing home to the many what high mental ability really is, and how completely they are themselves destitute of it. What such men do by intentional benefit is less instructive than that which they confer by the unintentional spectacle of what they are. This, it appears likely, we may before long much want. As a contemporary of Pitt and Fox said when they had passed away, "We are left with pigmies whom we know to be pigmies, because we have measured them with giants".

The want of an intellectual bond in the Liberal party will also be much more felt now that Mr. Gladstone has retired than it was before. The allegiance paid to him might often be, perhaps often was, hollow; still it was an allegiance. The consequent tie might be a frail tie, still it was a tie which there is nothing to replace. There is no one whom all sides of the Liberal party can even profess to reverence in the same way. Between the two extremes of the party—between men like Mr. Chamberlain and men like Lord Cardwell—how weak is now the bond, and how wide is now the contrast.

The most pleasant aspect of the subject is that, though Mr. Gladstone retires from the leadership of the Liberals, he does not retire from Parliament or from public life. We shall still be instructed by his occasional efforts, though not, as we have for so many years been, by his daily and constant efforts. And this will be a considerable compensation, especially as compared with the times most recent. It is impossible not to imagine that a nature at once so eager and so peculiar as Mr. Gladstone's must have suffered much in fulfilling a representative function as a party leader. He must have had to suppress much he would have said if he had been left unshackled, and have said much that he did say in a different way. It must have been painful to think that common people had a kind of veto on his words; that they had a kind of right to say, "Our leader ought not to say that; we ought not to be bound by this sort of thing". And as so often happens in a struggle against nature, we think Mr. Gladstone not unfrequently overdid what was necessary. We should be inclined to say that throughout very many of his speeches while Minister there was, notwithstanding their other great merits, a want of the idiosyncratic and individual charm to which we are used. The Minister was great, but the man, such as we had known him for years, and as doubtless he still is, seemed somehow disguised and eclipsed. From all hindrance of this sort we shall now be freed. Parliament will again have the most chosen thoughts of the most peculiar statesman of the age uttered not only in most eloquent but in most characteristic words, and it will be a great refreshment.

## THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LIBERAL PARTY.

(*From "The Economist," 6th February*, 1875.)

MR. FORSTER is acknowledged to be a man of sound judgment, and he never made a better use of it than when he withdrew from competing for the leadership of the Liberal party. If he had continued his candidature there would have been a contest. Several sorts of persons from several motives would not have served under him if they could avoid it. And a contest in a party is like a contest in a constituency, an element of permanent disunion. The organisation which supported the defeated candidate is a permanent nucleus of disaffection, which is always grumbling, which always says that anything which goes wrong might have been made to go right—that anything which goes right might have been made more right—that all misfortunes are faults—that all difficulties are either made or aggravated. At a serious crisis this "cave" of discontent is apt to become a scene of mutiny. A party leader chosen by contested election must always be in uncertainty as to the loyalty of his followers, for he knows that many of them would not have obeyed him if they could have helped it.

We do not profess to think that the choice which has been made is the best possible. Although we differ much in opinion from Mr. Forster, perhaps as much as any Liberals can or do, we cannot help feeling much interest in him. There must be something very remarkable in a man who, with no advantage of birth or fortune, with no particular advantage of education, without brilliant eloquence or graceful manners, has risen by solid sense and determined energy to be where he is. We do not remember any instance (and we doubt if there is an in-

stance) in which a self-made man of business has risen so high in England, and he has done so mainly by the sagacity and honesty which succeed in business.

There is, however, one great advantage which we gain by Mr. Forster's retirement. He is committed to a zealous advocacy of an immediate reduction of the county franchise. He spoke of it as if it would be a decided practical good, and mentioned that "great man Mr. Arch" as if his career were one which suggested no misgivings. But these are not the opinions of moderate Liberals. No one, indeed, who calls himself a Liberal—scarcely, indeed, any Conservative—accepts the Act of 1867 as final. It was a piece of chance legislation which nobody meant, and which the country did not understand. Such an accidental work will need much amendment, and probably one of those amendments will be the ultimate assimilation of the borough and county franchise. But sensible people in general think that imperfect as the Act of 1867 is, we should see how it works before we begin to alter it; that experience of the Act of 1832 taught us much which was unforeseen, and that probably the same will happen in this case; that doses of ignorance should not be administered too rapidly; that as the practical working of household suffrage in boroughs is still of dubious benefit, we should not extend it, in a hurry, and without correctives, to the counties, where the householders are still less competent. Mr. Forster was pledged to do this, but Lord Hartington is not so; and this is a principal reason why the latter has been preferred.

Lord Hartington's selection is a good instance of one use of an aristocracy. It was justly said by Whately—"In one respect a rise by merit exposes a man to more envy than that by personal favour, through family connection, private friendship, etc. For in this latter case, the *system* itself of preferring private considerations to public, is chiefly blamed, but the *individual* thus advanced is regarded much in the same way as one who is *born* to an estate or to a title. But when any one is advanced on the score of desert and qualifications, the system is approved, but the individual is more envied, because his advancement is felt as an affront to all who think themselves or

their own friends more worthy. 'It is quite right to advance men of great merit; but by this rule, it is I, or my friend So-and-so that should have been preferred.' When, on the other hand, a bishop or a minister appoints his own son or private friend to some office, every one else is left free to think 'If it had gone by merit, I should have been the man'." It is much easier for the Liberals of the front rank to serve under Lord Hartington than under any one else; and in the present peculiar circumstances it is a great gain, both to the party and to the country, to have a nobleman of sufficient sense and determination to be chosen leader.

From the choice of Lord Granville and of the Marquis of Hartington it would seem that the great "Whig families" are going again to aid the cause of progress in the same way in which they have twice in history aided it before. When Liberalism is popular it can prosper very well without aristocratic help. But in times of adversity it is different. The English people have little respect for maturers of theories and proposers of unaccepted schemes. At a period of transition, when the old formulas are extinct, and when new ideas must be thought out, in such a country as England the support of wealth and rank is invaluable, for they bring the visible signs which the world thinks most of to confirm the invisible ideas which it thinks least of. At the beginning of the century, Liberalism, which had been destroyed in this country by the excesses of the first French Revolution, gained time and strength to grow again under the shelter of the great "Whig houses". Their lands and position gave "Liberalism" the "respectability" without which nothing thrives in England, and which was exactly what it could not give itself. And in the same way, in a far older world, the principles of 1688 were matured under the same influence.

It has seldom happened in English history that the scene has changed so suddenly and so completely as in the last two years. When Parliament opened in 1873 a Liberal Government was in office with a powerful majority and every sign of permanence; now a Conservative Government replaces it with a similar majority and similar prospects. And at that time

we seemed to know where we stood. We had had much experience of the then existing Government, and even more of their then existing Opposition. But now we have a Government of which we have little experience opposed by an Opposition of which we have none. Political life is become a struggle between two unknown quantities, and its formula therefore is quite unknown.

## PRINCE BISMARCK'S LAST SPEECH.

(*From "The Economist," 27th March*, 1875.)

THE popularity which Prince Bismarck has gained by his last speech in the Prussian Diet is a little difficult to understand. Even in England we have seen it written of with grotesque enthusiasm as a model of masculine sagacity and statesmanship. Now, the substance of that speech was very simple. Prince Bismarck was defending the series of legislative measures which have had, for their ostensible object at least, to reduce the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church to dependence on the State, and especially the last of this series of measures which is intended to give the State the power of withdrawing at its pleasure all the aid given to the Catholic Church in certain dioceses, without leaving the Clergy of these dioceses at all more at liberty to act according to their own conscience than they were before. One of the old Lutheran Conservatives of Prussia, Dr. von Gerlach, objected strongly in the debate of last week to this series of measures, and especially to the last and final stroke. He thought that the conscience of religious sects should be left at liberty in all religious and ecclesiastical matters to govern their practice, and that the State should only interfere when it comes to a direct infringement of the laws of civil order and liberty. It was to strike a final blow at this view of Dr. von Gerlach's, that Prince Bismarck made the short speech which has been so enthusiastically received in Prussia and so profoundly admired even in tolerant England. The Prince quite agreed, he said, with Dr. von Gerlach that everybody ought to obey God rather than man; but the question was what obeying God rather than man really means. In his (Prince Bismarck's) opinion, he was serving God, King, and country alike in guarding the political and religious inde-

pendence of his nation against Roman oppression and intrigue. If Herr von Gerlach had intimated that the German Chancellor was desirous of introducing a political paganism into Germany, Herr von Gerlach had knowingly told a falsehood. A man of eighty—Dr. von Gerlach's age—he implied, might deserve deference if he did not strive to pervert the truth, but not when he did. The question was whether they were to bow down to the Pope rather than to the King. The Ultramontanes had made their speeches without any hope of convincing the National Liberal side of the House, and only with a view to reaching the more ignorant masses, who would thus read speeches which in Parliamentary reports could be printed with impunity, though in any other form they would render the publishers liable to legal penalties. He (Prince Bismarck) did not believe that the penal measure before the House would effect its purpose, so far as bringing the Roman Catholics into subjection was concerned, but it was right nevertheless to do all in the power of the Government for the end in view, without regard to consequences. Prince Bismarck and his opponents were quite agreed on the duty of serving God rather than man. Dr. von Gerlach thought he knew what was serving God better than Prince Bismarck, and Prince Bismarck thought he knew what was serving God better than Dr. von Gerlach. "I believe I serve God in serving my King for the protection of the community whose Monarch he is by God's grace, and in helping to defend the independence of his people against any foreign attack."

Such was Prince Bismarck's short and bitter, but, in our opinion, singularly unstatesmanlike speech, which has so deeply impressed Prussia and delighted England. Its essence consists in the strenuous assertion that to Prince Bismarck there is not only no sort of inconsistency between obeying God and obeying the King, in relation to these new ecclesiastical laws, but a real identity of drift in the two acts; and in the implied inference that anyone who thinks otherwise has a perverted conscience which deserves no sort of consideration from the Legislature. The imperiousness of its tone may be gathered from the remark that an old man of eighty who had

misconstrued his (Prince Bismarck's) motives and imputed to him a wish—which we doubt not is quite as far from his mind as Prince Bismarck declares it to be—to introduce a sort of political paganism into Prussia, is a conscious falsifier who deserves no sort of respect or consideration even in consideration of his age. Now, had any such speech as that been spoken in the British Parliament, even at the time of the so-called Papal aggression, would not everybody have called it violent, irrational, and thoroughly unworthy of a great Parliamentary statesman? Of course, we are not finding fault with Prince Bismarck for his own personal belief on the subject of the perfect consistency between loyalty and piety—a belief which is that probably of almost all sensible Englishmen. But could there by any possibility be a more wilful ignoring of the whole problem involved in the conflicting views of various consciences in relation to theology, than this cavalier way of cutting through the difficulty with a mere blow? The question for statesmen is not whether hearty Protestants like Prince Bismarck see anything objectionable in submitting the education of young clergymen to the rules laid down by an ultra-Erastian ministry, and choosing bishops and priests everywhere so as to satisfy the secular government, but whether a very different class of theologians who have been taught to believe in the miraculous permeation of the Church by divine influence, can reasonably be expected to see nothing morally objectionable in this. Yet to this question Prince Bismarck does not devote a single word of consideration. He simply strikes heavily, so to speak, those who differ from him. For him the service of God and the King means the same thing, as much or more now, after the ecclesiastical laws, as before them. Of course they do. But is it common sense to expect that Roman Catholics, or even high Lutherans like Herr von Gerlach, will think so too? All men who have any common sense, Prince Bismarck assumes, will agree with him. Well, if that be so, the world unfortunately contains a great many who have no common sense at all, and the Roman Church is full of them. Nay, even some Lutherans are so little able to follow him that they misjudge his motives, and impute to him

sympathy with a sort of Paganism, with which in all probability Prince Bismarck has not the faintest sympathy. But even so, who but a statesman who was accustomed to deal rather in blows than arguments would tell an old man of eighty that in thus misconstruing him he had lied? It seems to us that Parliamentary statesmanship cannot be very fully developed in Germany, and that English criticism on the Parliamentary statesmanship of the Continent is not very likely to be useful, when such a speech as this can be received with unbounded applause in Prussia and with a sort of envious admiration in England.

The truth is that for the moment the nationalism of Germany, and, most of all the States of Germany, of Prussia, is in an unnaturally excitable, and consequently irrational phase. We cannot exempt Prince Bismarck from blame for doing all in his power to stimulate this mood, but it is the mood of Germany and Prussia in the first instance, and of the vigorous but by no means either unobservant or compliant statesman who guides Germany, only in the second instance. Germany is at the present moment absurdly flushed with the new sense of her national importance. The majority of the national party cannot for the time believe that any creed is important enough to come into serious competition with the creed of Germanism. The Empire is the symbol of the new power and unity. Prince Bismarck is its voice. Nothing which runs counter to the national enthusiasm of the moment is regarded as having a moral standing ground at all. Now, of course, none of the genuine believers in any creed which has attempted in any degree to combat the ruling tendencies of secular Germany, can acquiesce in the cry of the day. It is just as impossible for Rome, or even the Lutheran Puseyism of the High Church party in Prussia, to bow down to the genius of Germany, as it is for Mr. Spurgeon to delight in the English establishment, or for Dr. Newman to admire the liberality of the Privy Council in not condemning the Theology of *Essays and Reviews*. Germany is going through a sort of epidemic of blind and frantic nationalism, a sort of political measles to which great nations in the infancy of their

conscious unity and power are very liable. We do not particularly blame the Germans—reflective as they boast to be—for the wildness and inconsiderateness of this phase of opinion. We do not even particularly blame Prince Bismarck for stimulating it, while he would be far wiser, as well as more disinterested, to try to moderate and keep it under control. But surely it is grossly out of place for English politicians who have for centuries been trying to get all political parties to see that they must leave ample verge for the theological convictions, eccentricities, even whims, of their neighbours, to throw up their hats in delight at Prince Bismarck's narrow and imperious bigotry. It is for us to warn the Germans that they do not really understand what they are about when they try to run down in this overbearing way all opinions which do not fit in with the national pride or vanity of the moment. The difficulties of disagreeing beliefs have worried statesmen for centuries, and only in these latter days has the calm and deliberate tolerance of English and American statesmen at length succeeded in solving, with tolerable success, the question of how to reconcile these bitter theological controversies with the order of a civilised State. In Germany at the present moment this solution is being treated as if it were the mere invention of moral cowardice and weakness. And the result is that fierce passions, which might easily culminate in civil war, are being fanned and fostered. It is not for us to help in this mischievous process. We cannot much diminish the danger, but we need not aggravate it. Prince Bismarck's latest speech seems to us the speech of a very vigorous, but not too scrupulous statesman, who, in treating national and religious passions, prefers the use of the spur just now to the use of the rein. We believe that his blunder arises partly from real inability to measure moral influences as he measures material forces, but partly also from observing how greatly this one-sidedness of his endears him to the majority of the people. We fear that he is sowing what other men less strong than he will reap, and that the harvest will not be a pleasant one. We are quite sure that no British statesman of the greater

days of British statesmanship would have regarded Prince Bismarck's policy with any other feeling than that of mingled dismay and disapproval; and it is to us as surprising as it is unwelcome to observe the disposition to envy Prince Bismarck's boldness on the part of English critics who, if they had properly studied English history, would instead have deprecated with the utmost earnestness Prince Bismarck's rash but too successful appeals to hasty national impulses and prejudices.

## SIR JOHN LUBBOCK'S ANCIENT MONUMENTS BILL.

(*From "The Economist," 17th April*, 1875.)

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK achieved a great victory over the ignorant Conservatism of the House of Commons and the indolent Conservatism of the Government in carrying the second reading of his "Ancient Monuments Bill," on Wednesday, by a majority of 22, in spite of the obstinate resistance of the Treasury, in the person of Mr. W. H. Smith. It is true that the greater personages of the Government did not speak and did not even vote against the measure, and that a great many steady Conservatives and even Tories voted with Sir John Lubbock; still the Treasury, in the person of Mr. W. H. Smith, gave its earnest resistance to the Bill, and the Treasury was beaten. And no wonder; for Mr. Smith had nothing to say against the Bill, except that in his view, in order to carry out the design of the Bill properly, the cost would be, not hundreds, but "hundreds of thousands" of pounds. That was gross exaggeration of Mr. Smith's; and besides, the answer is so easy. The Bill does not compel the Government to make any grant towards the expense of carrying out its provisions which the Treasury cannot reasonably afford. They have just the same power of cutting down the estimates to be demanded by the Commissioners for Preserving Ancient Monuments whom the Bill proposes to appoint, as they have of cutting down the estimates of any other officials whose expenses are thrown upon the Treasury. The eleventh clause of the Act says,—"the Commissioners may employ such persons and incur such expenses for the purposes of this Act as the Treasury may allow". It is therefore childish to assert that the Treasury will have to pay hundreds of thousands of pounds for the purposes of this

Act, unless the Treasury itself intends to sanction an expenditure to that amount; and if it does, whose fault is that? Obviously a great deal may be effected with very little expenditure indeed; and as regards the purchase of the right to protect local monuments, we may expect that the funds will be very frequently provided out of local sources, and if not, the Treasury can simply decline to provide it unless they really consider the value of the national object to be commensurate with the expense. A terrible outcry was made by the party which habitually pushes the rights of property beyond the extreme verge of either reason or justice, as to the injury which might be done to cultivators who are thinking of taking the land round some ancient dyke, for instance, running for many miles, perhaps, through the country, into cultivation, and who may be prevented from doing so by the Commissioners giving them notice that it is an Ancient Monument, and that if they wish to destroy it, they must first give the Commissioners an alternative right to buy it from them, or at least to buy from them the right of prohibiting any such destructive use of its site. But how could this injury be done? All that will be required of the tenant or owner of such an Ancient Monument will be some three months' delay in the execution of their plan. Within that time the Commissioners must either assent to the destructive operations proposed, or must agree to purchase from the owner or the tenant, as the case may be, the monument itself, or at least the right of restraining any injury to it. Now the effect of this arrangement will be rather to increase the value of such places to the needy cultivators than to diminish it. We strongly suspect that in the case of needy men, propositions to injure the ancient monuments which their land contains for agricultural purposes will be not unfrequently made, without any very serious intention of actually carrying out the proposal, in case the Commissioners decline to treat for the right to preserve them;—in other words, propositions of a tentative character will be made rather in the view of procuring the certain compensation, than in the view of securing the uncertain advantage derivable from taking what is very often

exceedingly unprofitable land into cultivation. Of course, pasturing sheep or cattle is no injury at all to Ancient Monuments of the kind contemplated. Cattle and sheep might pasture on the most curious Roman camps or other relics of antiquity without doing them any harm in the world. It is only building or agricultural operations which will endanger monuments of this kind, and such operations are much more likely to be suggested as a consequence of this Bill, *i.e.* with a view to obtaining the offer of compensation than they would be if this Bill should fail to pass. So far from seriously interfering with the rights of property, this Bill will in very many cases add to the value of the property to which it relates.

We scarcely ever remember to have read a debate in which the arguments of the Government and its supporters were so destitute even of plausibility. Mr. W. H. Smith, after pleading that the Government might not have strength of mind to keep down the pecuniary requisitions of the Ancient Monuments Commissioners within such reasonable sums as would not seriously affect the Estimates, went on to say that he objected to the Bill, because it would have a tendency to relieve owners of property of responsibilities, "which they had hitherto been called on to discharge, and had in the main discharged faithfully and well". A more pumped-up and artificial argument it would not be easy to discover. In the first place, the contention of several of Mr. W. H. Smith's friends had been that there were no real *responsibilities* on the owners of Ancient Monuments except such as they themselves spontaneously chose to assume—the very essence of the criticisms on the Bill being that it was unjust to hamper the temporary or permanent proprietors of these monuments by forbidding them to destroy them at their own pleasure, and in the interests of their own property. And in the next place, Lord F. Hervey had made what was held to be the hit of the debate on his own side of the question, by ridiculing the notion that it was of any consequence to any one to preserve permanent records of a horde of barbarians "who stained themselves blue, sat under the mistletoe, and indulged in

obscene rites". Such being the views of some of Mr. W. H. Smith's chief allies in resisting the Bill, it was hardly competent to him to deprecate any inroad on that profound sense of responsibility, which, according to the Secretary to the Treasury, at present inspires the owners or tenants of Ancient Monuments, and induces them to keep these monuments in good preservation. And not only did the speeches of Mr. Smith's allies refute Mr. Smith's own allegations, but in point of fact they were not objections at all to Sir John Lubbock's Bill. Those guardians of Ancient Monuments who really do feel their responsibilities for these monuments to the public, are not touched by the Bill at all. They may not, indeed, after notice has been given to them, "injure or permit injury" to the monument without obtaining either the consent of the Commissioners or their refusal to buy if not the monument itself, at least the right to prevent its being injured; and Mr. Smith suggests that the fear of injury happening to it without the intention or wish of the owner, is likely to weigh so much on the owner's mind that he will be compelled at once to apply to the Commissioners to relieve him of his guardianship by taking the monument off his hands. But Mr. Smith can hardly have read the Bill on which he was commenting when he offered this suggestion. It is true that after the property in, or a power of restraint as regards any injury to, an "Ancient Monument" *has been* already acquired by the Commissioners, then suitable penalties are to be enforced against any persons "unlawfully and wilfully" injuring it, though even in this case the condition that the injury must be "wilful" would completely prevent anything like risk attaching to involuntary neglect. But Mr. W. H. Smith's remark applies, of course, not to monuments in which the Commissioners have already acquired rights, but to those still wholly in the ownership of their original proprietors. And in that case the only penalty provided for injuries inflicted by the legal owners or tenants on the monuments in question, is the penalty of forthwith giving the Commissioners a right to restrain such injuries for the future. In other words, the owner of an Ancient Monument, who has not yet

parted with any right in it to the Commissioners, and who involuntarily or otherwise injures it, is not liable to any such penalty as the eighth clause imposes for the mischief already done, but only to the penalty declared in the fifth clause, which is the very light one of thereby conferring on the Commissioners the right to restrain him from further injury. But an act of carelessness or negligence, the worst penalty of which is that it invests the Commissioners with the power of guardianship for the future, will not be so formidable in its consequences as to frighten any proprietor into the immediate transfer to the Commissioners of a monument which he himself values and is genuinely anxious to preserve to the country. Mr. Smith's grotesque fear of diminishing the rather diminutive sense of responsibility which English squires or farmers now feel for the preservation of our national monuments, is as groundless a fear as a practical man ever persuaded himself that he really felt. Those proprietors who really care for these things will know very well that the Commissioners would be as little likely to interfere with them as the Treasury (whose sanction for any expense must be obtained) itself. And as for those proprietors or owners who don't care for the preservation of national monuments, why it is precisely for the purpose of curbing their unruly proprietary bigotry that this Bill is proposed.

The House of Commons did well on Wednesday to reject the advice of the Treasury officials. Ancient Monuments are not less important, and in some respects are more important to the country, than ancient chronicles or records. Indeed, they *are* ancient chronicles and records with all the vividness of real life about them. And it is even less reasonable to complain of the invasion of property involved in simply restraining proprietors from acts of destruction, than it is to complain of such an invasion of property in cases where owners are compelled to sell unwholesome streets or houses on the ground that disease accumulates in them and that vice thrives. Property has its duties to the national *mind* no less than to the moral or physical well-being of the nation.

## LORD SALISBURY ON MODERATION.

(*From "The Economist," 3rd July*, 1875.)

At the two public dinners addressed by Conservative orators on Wednesday, Lord Derby and Lord Salisbury made speeches of a certain interest in relation to the latest symptoms of official life. Lord Derby, who is of course always cautious, and Lord Salisbury, who is perhaps rather seldom so, both spoke with some elation of their new labour measures, as tending to take away "the stock-in-trade of agitation," or, as Lord Salisbury put it, as removing "the combustibles which in less fortunate days some unlucky spark might set alight". But though this is the mode in which it is probably most convenient for members of the Conservative Cabinet to speak of their proposed concessions—both as regards Friendly Societies and the Law of Conspiracy—to the demands of the working classes, there is nothing in either speech which would at all lead us to suppose that the statesman who delivered it wishes to shape Conservative policy with any special reference to the demands of working-class agitators. Indeed, Lord Salisbury, as we understand his speech, points entirely in another direction. He declares that the proper lesson of the recent Conservative triumph is the policy of party self-restraint and party moderation; that Mr. Gladstone was defeated because he chose to be too much guided by the Radical wing of his party, and that the Conservatives would court defeat if they allowed themselves to be too much guided by the Tory wing of their party. This is very different doctrine from that which Lord Salisbury used to preach two or three years ago. Then he always said that the Conservatives should not take office without a real majority, because they could not pursue a genuine Conservative policy so long as they had to conciliate

Liberal support, and that whenever they gained a majority, then they ought to abide by their principles, and embody the Conservative doctrine with earnestness and fidelity. Now he repudiates anything like rigid fidelity to the principle of the party. He thinks there should be the greatest moderation in Conservatism, the greatest wish to give the constituencies no excuse for restoring their confidence to the Liberals. However, Lord Salisbury certainly does not desire to take the wind out of the Liberal sails by consulting, in the present instance, the wishes of the working-class leaders. What his speech points at is a leaning to the Moderate Liberal view, a disposition to conciliate the Whigs or Conservative Liberals, not a disposition to seek popularity with the mob. What he preaches to his Conservative friends is a certain amount of sympathy for what he calls "the mildly good-humoured, not very consistent, government of the Whigs". He wants to see the Conservatives almost as willing to initiate reform as the old Whigs would have been, lest otherwise the appetite for liberalism should grow upon the country, and the pendulum swing back again. But Lord Salisbury, at least, is not of that party in the Cabinet which would be at all disposed to support Mr. Disraeli's policy of bidding for the favour of those ultra-Democratic Conservatives who are distinguishable only by a very fine shade indeed from the Democratic Radicals. Lord Salisbury's speech, as we understand it, is meant to promote a policy of conciliation to the Left-Centre, instead of to the Left. He hopes to lean on the middle party, the party which, whether it calls itself Conservative-Liberal under Lord Hartington, or Liberal-Conservative under such a leader as Sir Stafford Northcote, is not really very materially different in its elements. But there is, no doubt, a section of the Cabinet with somewhat different views. Mr. Disraeli himself, if he has enough of his old energy left, will be quite sure to flirt with the Democratic Conservatives, and to recommend taking the wind out of the Liberal sails by proposing concessions to the working class which Lord Hartington at least would be very unlikely to approve. As far as we can see, Mr. Cross probably leans to this section of the Cabinet.

Unquestionably the idea of his Labour Laws Conspiracy Bill points in this direction, and even Sir Stafford Northcote, in the conduct of his Friendly Societies Bill, has shown himself not entirely indifferent to influences of the same kind. It is undoubtedly a great temptation to some of the Conservatives to show, as they showed in 1867, that they can propose measures more popular than any to which the Liberals have lent their sanction, and yet win the battle under a Tory war-cry. There is a fascination in "dishing the Whigs" which, to some temperaments, is almost irresistible. To overbid your opponents, and yet find your party more numerous, though not stronger, after the operation than before, has in it that kind of charm belonging to all games of finesse. True the country party never enjoy the discovery that they have lent themselves to the success of such a game as this. But then the country party never discover what they are doing till it is done, and then, as it is too late to undo it, they very easily reconcile themselves to a degradation of their policy which brings with it an accession of popularity and power. Probably Lord Salisbury intended to be understood as repudiating this policy, when he concluded his speech by saying that the Conservative party will be content with the praise of having suited their measures to "the wants of the day, and the wishes of the people," even though that praise does not suffer them to connect "any revolution with their name,"—for undoubtedly, in 1867, the Conservatives did connect "a revolution with their name," and so they would do again, if they ever again made their appeal to that "residuum" on whom they then first conferred power. If Lord Salisbury means anything definite by his speech, he means to deprecate any such course. He wishes to lean on the Moderates of both sides of the House, and to reduce to a minimum the influence of the Democrats, whether Radical or Tory.

And this, no doubt, is the only legitimate course for the Conservatives to follow, because it is the only course except reaction, the effect of which they can really understand and honestly approve. And as for reaction, which they might both understand and approve, and for which some of them

might feel a far more sincere enthusiasm than they can for the policy of the Left Centre, Lord Salisbury sufficiently disposes of that by showing that it would offend the country, and reconvert it, almost prematurely, to Liberalism. Putting reactionary policy, then, aside, there remains for Conservatives only the choice between embarking on the unknown sea of the ignorant Democratic Conservatism of the masses, and that of steadily supporting the moderate policy recommended by the educated caution of the soberest men of both parties. Those who lean to the former policy do so partly from the pleasurable excitement which they take in political gambling, and partly from enjoying the consciousness so rare to the Conservatives, of feeling that their cause, whether it be a retrograde cause or not, is the popular cause, and retrograde, if it be retrograde, only because the masses of the people are retrograde. But those who lean to the wiser policy know, what the others do not, the real effect of what they do. They are not trusting themselves to a sea of popular prejudice, but accepting the cautions which the culture and experience of the country have suggested to the most intelligent observers of either party. No principle is really so Conservative as the principle of looking before you leap, none so little Conservative, though we quite admit it may also be the very opposite of Liberal, as taking leaps in the dark. Popular constituencies are, as we are daily learning with clearer certainty, by no means, as a rule, anxious for real progress ; but it does not in the least follow that they may not wish for something—like the utmost lenity to corruption for instance—which even the truest Conservatives would think bound up with real regress. Now we submit that Conservatism that is worth anything is infinitely more closely related with the predominant influence of sober and cultivated thought in politics, than with the possible triumphs of popular bigotries in bringing back shades of political or ecclesiastical superstitions long gone by. Lord Salisbury is quite right in supposing that a true Conservative should feel much graver dread of renewing past phases of Toryism by appealing to the ignorant prejudices of the masses, than he should of promoting gradual changes which Liberals

have advocated, but for which sound reasons can be given, reasons recommending themselves to the minds of sober and considerate persons. Mr. Disraeli once spoke of a Conservative Government—in this sense—as an "organised hypocrisy" —and a great deal of his subsequent career has shown that he really despises mere safe and prudent political tentativeness, as we may call it, and would sooner commit himself to the tender mercies of popular forces of which neither he nor any other man has really fathomed the true scope. But what such a Government really is, is not organised hypocrisy, but organised experience, guiding itself by the principle of continuity so far as there is not distinct visible reason for a deviation from the course hitherto pursued; while Tory Government, in Mr. Disraeli's sense, is organised risk and rashness. It conjures up no doubt a popular force to back the Conservative party, but it conjures up a force which it cannot control, and of which no one can really predict the results. Lord Salisbury is a great accession to the ranks of the Moderates; he has genius and resolution, and if we can but trust him to guide his followers into the well-worn tracks of the middle party, England will have much more confidence in the Conservative Government than it at present has. No doubt the attitude of Conservative Liberals is better than the attitude of Liberal Conservatives. But either the one or the other are infinitely better than those rash Tory Radicals who may have got hold of a real force, but have not the slightest notion how to ascertain the law of that force's expansion. All we know of that problematic force is that it certainly contains in itself the seeds of incalculable mischief and prejudice, as well, no doubt, as of some inevitable reforms. But those men certainly are not true Conservatives who have more confidence in the onward march of popular ignorance than in the tentative advance of prudent and cautious culture.

## MR. BRIGHT ON LANDOWNING.

(*From "The Economist," 29th January*, 1876.)

Mr. Bright has a controversy with Lord Derby as to the number of landowners in the country, and especially in Scotland, as to the figures of which we shall not say anything. But there are some underlying points of principle in the matter to which sufficient attention is not, we think, given.

First, certainly in England, and probably in Scotland too, the number of nominal proprietors is very greatly less than that of the real owners. The habit of England as to land is *family* ownership. The estate is settled in such a way as to secure the wife, to secure the children, to regulate the enjoyment of the property in a settled way as the family convenience provides; to prevent its being wasted and the whole family made penniless by the fault of any single person. How much of the land of England is held in "family tenure," if we may coin a word for it, we cannot tell; but it is very large indeed, and you could not get at it by any return of nominal proprietors. In most cases, such a return would only give the names of trustees who have no real interest in the property at all; to get at the real truth, the deeds of every family must be examined, the equitable as well as legal interests counted, and the results tabulated, which would be impossible. A "Doomsday book" for the nineteenth century, for which Lord Derby once wished, is an unattainable ideal, to which in England there can be hardly any approximation. The present species of conjoint ownership is too complex to be described in any return. But nothing can be more strange than that Mr. Bright should wholly ignore its existence; he never mentions the word family settlement; he does not seem to know that any such arrangements exist.

The singularity is greater because this is the cardinal difficulty which impedes every attempt to simplify English land tenure. The great obstruction to the free transfer of the soil is that so many people are more or less interested in it. A conveyancer, when he examines a title, has to see that all the existing owners convey, and that all those whom he sets down as extinct owners are really such, and have passed away. How far this system is good—whether the security of families is a better or worse thing than the free transfer of land—whether some of the advantages of that security may not be gained without sacrificing so much as we sacrifice now—are questions; but it is not a question, for it is certain, that what now impedes land-dealing is this system of many owners, and not, as Mr. Bright says, a system of single ones. Mr. Bright thinks too that the English laws of land tenure are constructed on feudal principles. But the greatest characteristic of these laws, as compared with all others which have descended from the middle ages, is the quickness and the facility with which they emancipated themselves from feudalism. Though perpetual, or very long entails prevailed almost everywhere else in Europe, they have long been abolished here; and the tying up of property has been restricted to limits which may be too long or too short, but have nothing to do with feudality.

And the proof that they have nothing to do with it is that they extend to money which never was "feudal" as well as to land which was. The funds can be tied up just as long as land, and in fact are so. A very large sum in them is so set apart for the security of families just as land is, and by deeds whose operation lasts just the same time. No good can, but much harm must come from discussing the transfer of land, ignoring the main obstruction, and inventing an imaginary one.

But there is a second and worse mistake in Mr. Bright's reasoning. He assumes—he does not try to prove, he simply takes for granted—that cheap and easy transfer of land will tend in England to produce a class of peasant proprietors. But there cannot be a greater error. A little examination will, we think, establish that an increased cheapness of land

transfer would consolidate the main part of the land of England in the hands of the monied classes even more effectually than now, and that the working men who cultivate the fields would own just as little of them.

The principle is that a dear thing will, as a rule, and in the long run, be bought by those who can give most for it. And in England, as in all old countries, land is a very dear thing. If land is at £80 an acre, five acres would take £400, and to suppose that an English agricultural labourer is likely to possess £400 is to go out of the present world. His imagination could not rise to the magnitude of such a sum; if he had only the tenth part of it he would be off to the beer-house, and be drunk for weeks. And even the small farmer who has such a capital can employ it much better in cultivating a farm say of 100 acres than in buying five of his own. Land in England will scarcely pay 3 per cent. on the purchase money, whereas a small farmer looking after things himself, and watching each item of outlay, probably makes 15 per cent., or more. Nothing, therefore, is more ruinous to such a farmer than to change him to a proprietor. In so doing you would at once make a poor man of him.

In the long run, when countries have attained a certain measure of intelligence, money goes with quickness and certainty where there is most to be made of it—at any rate, it is bad political economy, and most unsafe besides, to expect to create a whole new class of men on the assumption that money will not so go. But every attempt to create peasant proprietors in England by making land cheap really assumes this, and will, therefore, fail. Persons of small capital who know how to cultivate land will find they can live far better by cultivating a fair quantity of other people's land than by keeping to a petty patch of their own.

In the present state of agriculture this becomes palpable, because there are so many things to illustrate its principle. Nothing could be more wasteful or more absurd than for a small farmer to own his own steam plough. Such a man would at once say he could not afford to lock up so much capital. But his buying land is in its financial effect just the

same, for land is but one instrument of cultivation just as this plough is another.

We shall be asked, if peasant proprietorship is thus economically unprofitable, why does it exist in so many countries? The continent of Europe is pretty well exclusively so cultivated. The answer is that the continent inherited this system from the middle ages, and that now though it might be economically advantageous to extricate itself from it, the fixed habits of society forbid, and the system cannot be changed. In early times this method of cultivation is substantially the only one possible. There is, then, no scientific agriculture, no large moving capital, no steam ploughs, or other machines. The only way, then, to till the soil is to get some peasant with his own hands to do so. All through mediæval Europe some serf—some villain—some *adscriptus glebæ*—is to be found fixed to the land, and cultivating it. Gradually, being fixed to the soil, he obtains fixed rights in it; he comes to pay some settled rent or payment, or sort of service to his lord, and all above is more or less his. Thus a hundred years ago there was in most European States a double ownership, a *seigneur* under some name claiming services or dues, and a peasant under some name paying them. In many places this exists still; but in the best parts, either by revolution or purchase, the lord has ceased to exist. He has been either bought out or thrust out; and so peasants have become the sole proprietors. But it is a system which would not now create itself. It remains, because man is not a purely economical animal; because these peasants love their lands with an intense passion. But it remains in the richest parts with difficulty. Even in France wealth begins to make inroads upon it.

The growth of this system was interrupted in England by the demand for labour, which made the "villain" glad to leave the land and seek town wages; and by the growth of sheep-farming, natural when this country was an exporter of wool, as well as a great manufacturer of it. We never had peasant proprietors, because the labourers could go elsewhere (which on the continent, they could not), and the landowners were

glad they should (which on the continent they were not). That the English agricultural labourer is now ill paid is true, but this is mainly the result of improvident multiplication, stimulated by a disastrous poor-law; originally it was prosperity—comparative prosperity, as compared with the continent—which unfixed him from the soil, and prevented his acquiring an interest in it. But it will be urged there are peasant proprietors not only on the continent, where they have thus inherited them, but in the United States, and almost everywhere in English colonies. But the reply is, that there the economical conditions are different. Land is very cheap, and a person of a little capital can acquire quite as much of it as he is able to cultivate. No one there will work on other people's land, because virgin land worth only a trifle is lying idle. In such a place and period peasant proprietorship arises like a weed in the soil. Nothing else is possible then and there. But you cannot infer from its naturalness in new countries the possibility of transplanting it to an old country like England, where economical circumstances are not such as to favour, but such as to oppose it.

Mr. Bright seems to approve of the French law of compulsory equal division at a father's death between children. But this does not seem to be the best French opinion. Putting aside the effect on land, which is not so formidable in France where population is so nearly stationary, as it would be in England, where it augments fast, the result on business is pernicious. A capitalist in various undertakings cannot leave one to one son and another to another, and portion off the daughters as he can here, but the law gives all equal shares in each. At each generation the most complex affairs are thrown into a compulsory and often ill-assorted partnership, which often causes evil, and the apprehension of which discourages enterprise. Instead of a rich and active capitalist being able, as with us, to feel that he can provide comfortably for his children by a proper adjustment of bequests to circumstances, he feels in France that after his death his family must squabble in a vain attempt at an unattainable equal division. No law

could be devised more likely to make men shun business or to make them uncomfortable in it.

Some years ago peasant proprietorship was much pressed, because it gave the mass of the people the sanction of property, and so settled society on a stable basis. But now France, the greater educator of Europe by her misfortunes, has taught us a new lesson in this matter. We now know that peasant proprietorship spreads not only the sense of property but a panic of property. The one idea of a French *paysan* is that he may lose his *terre*. All politics to him begin and end in finding some one to keep it safe for him. A main difficulty in the way of—perhaps an insuperable obstruction to—free Government in France, is the fright of small holders about their plots of land, which makes them hate agitation, fear discussion, and be always ready to run to a despot.

We can imagine nothing, therefore, less in the spirit of the present time, or less likely to happen, than the creation of a peasant proprietorship in England, and we are glad to feel sure that the Liberal party will not, as Mr. Bright advises, agitate for it, for they would be binding themselves to attempt an undesirable impossibility.

## THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY BILL.

(*From "The Economist," 4th March*, 1876.)

LORD SALISBURY'S speech last week on introducing the Oxford University Bill was, in many respects, a pleasant surprise to those who have been accustomed to hear his attacks on the educational reforms of the Liberal Government. The scorn with which he spoke of the University system of bestowing prizes without demanding new efforts proportionate to these prizes from those who gain them, was very refreshing when considered as proceeding from the most Conservative member of a Conservative Administration. But the truth is that Lord Salisbury, like all the abler English statesmen, has a profound scorn for idleness, and, indeed, for anything like that cultivated dawdling which so often does duty for work in polished academical circles. Whatever his Bill may do, it is evident enough that Lord Salisbury's intention is to get an equivalent in University or College work for the greater number of the fellowships, and that he hopes to see but a few "idle" fellowships left, just to bridge over the gulf between University distinction and professional distinction in the world, for the few who, having gained all the honours which academical life can give, are yet more fitted to be useful in the work of the world than in the prosecution of abstract studies, or the task of imbuing others with the love of those studies. So far, Lord Salisbury's speech was certainly more satisfactory than his Bill. We do not deny that, with a skilful choice of Commissioners, it is quite possible that the machinery of his Bill should, to some moderate extent, carry out the reforms for which he seemed to express a desire in his speech. But at the same time there does not seem to be any guarantee that these reforms will be carried out. What his Bill does, is to put it into the power

of a certain body of men, not as yet named, with the concurrence, or, at least, without the violent opposition of the various Oxford Colleges, to insist on certain economies and redistributions of revenue, which would result in effecting Lord Salisbury's object of giving the greater Collegiate and University rewards only to those who would accept great responsibilities and duties with those rewards. At the same time, the Bill leaves everything so much in blank, and goes such a very little way towards settling the principles of the proposed reforms, that, as far as we can see, the parliamentary battle on its value, if battle there be, should turn almost wholly on the names of the Commissioners proposed, as soon as these names come to be announced, and on the views which they may at any time have expressed with respect to University reform. If it should turn out, as it probably will, that the Commissioners to be named before the Bill passes through Committee have not made up their own minds as to what they want, and that some of them are very cautious in relation to all innovations, and that even the boldest of them are tender of historic and traditional claims, all that Parliament will really be called on to sanction in sanctioning the Bill, will be an admission that something ought to be done, and that that something should be determined by the discretion of eminent but timid persons. If Lord Salisbury himself could be one of those persons, we should to a certain extent be reassured as to the working of the Bill; for, Conservative as Lord Salisbury is, he has that zeal for honest work, and that contempt for anything like trifling, which would ensure at least a certain class of reforms, though these might not always be the most necessary. But, of course, Lord Salisbury himself cannot serve on the Commission which the Oxford University Bill proposes, and there is, we think, some reason to fear lest the Commissioners whom he may name will be more disposed to sympathise with the fears of the Collegiate Conservatives than he himself would be. At all events, it is always a delicate thing for Parliament to sanction a reform without laying down at least its chief principles itself. Now this Lord Salisbury's Bill certainly does not do. It points out the kind of remodellings of trusts which may be desirable both

in relation to the University and in relation to the Colleges, but, as regards the extent of these reforms, and their applicability to particular academical cases, the Bill is wholly silent, and leaves everything to the discretion of the Commissioners. Nor is this all. There can be no doubt that the chief revenues now misapplied are the revenues of the Colleges. The University is very poor,—much too poor for its duties,—and whatever is done in the way of redistribution will result in the gain of the trusts of the University, and, more or less, in a subtraction of endowments from Collegiate trusts. Now for the purpose of reforming the Colleges, the University Commissioners to be appointed will not be the legislating body. Any College, which does not concur with the University in a scheme satisfactory to the Commissioners for its own reform before the end of 1877, will be liable to legislative renovation by a body composed of the Commissioners, and of three elected representatives of the College. Of course this will give an immense force to the natural objections felt by the backward Colleges to the renovating process. Three representatives well versed in the affairs of the College will put a very tight curb over the progressive tendencies of a probably rather timid Commission. This provision, especially when we consider that the Commission itself will be named by a Tory Administration, looks to us a good deal like putting a strong drag on a carriage just as it is beginning to climb a hill. Whatever may be hoped from Lord Salisbury's Bill, it certainly cannot reasonably be hoped that any very radical policy, securing a wholesome poverty for the Colleges, will result from it.

We say a "wholesome" poverty, because we are deeply convinced that the great wealth which has accrued to these Collegiate bodies in our Universities has been, and is, of the nature of a drawback to the true objects of academical life, instead of a stimulus to them. Just as in certain bad private schools, where almost every child gets a prize, the prize system certainly is a soporific instead of an incentive to exertion, so in Oxford and Cambridge, the unfortunate abundance of emoluments which secures for at least one in every small group of young men the advantages (or dis-

advantages) of a partially or completely gratuitous education, clearly does tend to depress rather than to stimulate the proper intellectual life of a University. No doubt a great many more men go through what is called a University training than would go through it if there were no such abundance of prizes to be gained. But then the true life of a University depends far less on the number of men who are included in its society than on the kind of life they lead, and the nature of the influences which they exert. A very small knot of men may, by the high character of their interests and the ardour of their discussions, exert a very considerable influence on the life of a nation, while a number vastly larger, even hundreds of times as large, who cannot carry this intensity into their pursuits, and this earnestness into their discussions, will exert comparatively little influence on the life of the same nation. We do not hesitate to say that Oriel College alone, at the time it contained the great group of eager-minded men, of whom Newman, Whately, and Arnold were, perhaps, the best known, exerted a greater and better influence on the mind of England —exercised, that is, more of the true functions of a University —than the whole University of Oxford exerts now. And the reason we take to be simply this—that that small knot of able and distinguished men succeeded in opening up deep problems in which the whole educated classes of England were more or less interested, and in putting a new zeal and disinterestedness into the discussion of those problems. At the present moment, Oxford exerts no such specific influence on the mind of the nation. It trains probably a much larger number of men who go in for honours, but these men are comparatively little interested in truth and much in mere intellectual success; and the influence they in their turn exert on their juniors is an influence which tries even intellectual subjects by a worldly standard — the standard of the competitive examination. And it can hardly be doubted that one great reason of this is that freer distribution of educational resources which resulted from University reform. No doubt under the old system the revenues were grossly jobbed. But then the result of that was that there was not so much left with which to tempt

young men into pursuing intellectual studies from a non-intellectual motive, the motive merely of a desire to succeed in life.

We, of course, are not speaking as if there were anything wrong in the desire to succeed in life. On the contrary, in its legitimate sphere no desire can be more wholesome. All we wish to point out is that this desire is not the same as the desire for pure knowledge and truth as such, and that the mixed motives which result from pursuing intellectual studies for such an end are not what we look for from a University, and not of the sort which a University is best fitted to produce. We are disposed to think that men who want to succeed in life would do better, both for themselves and for the world in which they hope to shine, by plunging earlier into life, than by immersing themselves for three or four years in studies in which they have little interest on their own account, and which they pursue chiefly because they can earn money by them, and because they believe that they can afterwards use them as stepping-stones to worldly success. University life exercises its peculiar and happiest influence chiefly on those for whom literary and speculative questions have a very high charm of their own. And such men become fewer and are less distinguishable from the crowd, the more there are who pursue these same studies for a very different purpose, namely, for the emoluments which they may gain by them, and the professional advantages which these emoluments may bring. We are convinced that if the Colleges of our Universities had very much fewer money prizes to give, and were, therefore, chiefly attended by those who feel a disinterested desire for the learning which can be acquired in them, they would exercise a very much higher influence on the life of the nation. Certainly Oxford did more for England when a great part of her revenue was misappropriated than she does now. The result of dividing her property more fairly among the crowd of intellectual competitors has been, more or less, that these competitors have begun to postpone the intellectual to the worldly advantages of academical success, and that thereby the tone of scholastic thought has been lowered.

We do not doubt that by increasing the incomes of professorships, and providing adequate means for the few who are really capable of intellectual research, a great deal may be done to raise the tone of University society. But we should like to see more prospect than there appears to be of diminishing the excessive number of prizes attainable by very ordinary ability, the only effect of which is to launch into an academical career men whose chief object is to succeed in life, and who, therefore, destroy the characteristic tone of academical society, without attaining any greater ultimate success than they could easily reach by other and more appropriate means.

## THE CONSERVATIVE VEIN IN MR. BRIGHT.

(*From "The Economist," 29th April*, 1876.)

It seems a paradox to say that there are few more typical Conservatives in the House of Commons than Mr. Bright; and yet the assertion is in one sense certainly true. Vehemently as he has fought for the cause of popular right, and eloquently as he has, at times, attacked the privileged classes who resisted these reforms, Mr. Bright's political notions are,—and this is the characteristic of a Conservative,—probably more strictly prepossessions and traditions, less the result of inner deliberation and intellectual judgment, than those of any Conservative in the House of Commons, immeasurably more so than those of the Conservative leader. We doubt very much whether even Mr. Gathorne Hardy has as much right to represent the Conservative whose political mind is the product of deep traditional, and, we may say, hereditary preoccupations, as Mr. Bright. Of course it is not merely the accident that a man's traditional feelings on politics represent the tendencies of the future rather than the tendencies of the past, which makes him in this sense a Liberal rather than a Conservative. We are now using the word rather in relation to character than in relation to the progress of events. And in this sense we should say that while the Liberal turn of mind denotes the willingness to admit new ideas, and the perfect impartiality with which those ideas, when admitted, are canvassed and considered, the Conservative turn of mind denotes adhesiveness to the early and probably inherited ideas of childhood, and a very strong and practically effective distrust of the novel intellectual suggestions which come unaccredited by any such influential associations. Now in this sense, it

hardly needed Mr. Bright's very able speech on Wednesday, against Women's Suffrage, to show that constitutionally, though not in the sense which the accident of chronology attaches to the word, Mr. Bright is a Conservative. Mr. Bright has been throughout his life a very warm friend of what is called progress on all subjects on which he inherited from his early traditions the ideas of progress. But it is not possible to mention a single subject on which he has abandoned the traditions of his youth in favour of the newer ideas of his maturity, and of the age in which that maturity has been cast. Let us cast a glance all round the political world. In relation to the question of Throne or Republic, it cannot be doubted that he inherited from his forefathers a sort of abstract preference for a Republic, together with a very decided disposition to let well alone, and acquiesce in a throne so long as that throne is dignified by high character and personal virtues. And this is precisely the shade of policy which he has always represented whenever such matters have come into discussion at all. That Mr. Bright has always been the first to claim a kindly and cordial consideration for the Republic ultimately founded by the descendants of the Pilgrim fathers in the United States of America, we all know. But we also all know how, whenever anything like a taunt has been cast at the institution of royalty in England, Mr. Bright has been foremost to lend the shield of his personal enthusiasm to the present wearer of the British crown. When the Queen is in question it would be impossible to name a more cordial Conservative than Mr. Bright. His feelings are kindled, like the feelings of a cavalier of old, at the mere mention of her name, as Mr. Ayrton has had occasion to know. No doubt it is in great measure the simplicity and worth of the present monarch which endears her so much to Mr. Bright. But that, again, shows that old associations and emotions, not mere intellectual convictions, are at the root of his feelings. He does not desire to discriminate between the institution and the form which the institution takes at the present moment. The mixed feelings which he has always felt grow stronger with his years. He is as earnest as ever in his abstract admiration for republics.

He is more earnest than ever in his concrete loyalty to the throne.

Or take questions of constitutional reform, and consider his attitude on them. He has always been eager for the enlargement of the franchise up to the point of a household franchise. He holds that family life is a sort of guarantee for English sobriety—a notion very dear to the British middle class, but not perhaps very adequately sustained by the testing of experience. For that inherited idea he has fought gallantly till he has succeeded in making it part of the British constitution, at least as regards the boroughs, and he is pledged of course to extend it to the counties. But while he is eloquent on behalf of the guarantee given by a householder's responsibility and ties, and would be the last, we suspect, to ask us to dispense with it, as a condition of the suffrage, any attempt to take guarantees of another sort, which were not familiar to his childhood—like that known as cumulative voting, or representation of minorities—he has always hated with an intensity and inexorability almost amusing. But some one will say that this only shows that Mr. Bright is really Liberal, and not Conservative,—that he sees these suggestions advanced by those who grudge the democracy its triumphs, and not by those who trust the people. Well then take this question of the women's franchise. Our readers are aware that we have advocated that change partly on the ground that in the working class, at least,—the most numerous class,—the women are often more careful, and intelligent, and scrupulous, and competent to vote, than the men,—partly because we have regarded them as likely to be themselves the better for an extension of their practical interests. But Mr. Bright, after voting once reluctantly for it, has at last been unable to suppress the disgust with which this proposal to turn family life and traditions (as they have been transmitted to him) upside down affects him, and has broken through the trammels of personal ties to speak with all the force and vigour of his character on behalf of traditions so deeply ingrained into it. This metamorphosis, as it seems to him, of the true functions of women, revolts him far more than it

revolts the bulk of the Conservative party, some of whom, indeed, may perhaps have adopted the cry for women's suffrage out of party motives, but most of whom, no doubt, sympathised far more deeply with Mr. Bright than with any of their own leaders. Indeed, Mr. Bright dwelt on the idea that a revolution rather than a reform was involved in the proposal, with the genuine Conservative horror of revolution. There was not much evidence in his speech that he had carefully weighed the probable results of the change, and found them dangerous. On the contrary, the speech went to prove that the change, if adopted, must be adopted on the ground of considerations fundamentally different from those which had recommended the various reforms of the franchise already adopted. And this seemed to be almost enough for him. Prove that it was a proposal not only new in detail, but new in principle, and it lost all charm for him. Revolution is as much a term of reproach to Mr. Bright as it is to Mr. Gathorne Hardy, though it means somewhat different things in the two men's mouths. In each of them alike it represents the antithesis of all the cherished traditions of early years.

In short, Mr. Bright's political constitution vehemently repels the new ideas of modern statesmanship. He cannot bear the agitation for the election of labourers or artisans as members of Parliament—a new idea which seems to him subversive of political traditions. He wisely snubs Home Rule. He will not listen with patience to any argument for the fair representation of minorities. He declines all invitations to join the Alliance League for the diminution of public-houses. His Liberal sympathies are confined to the causes which he found popular among his people long before he was a great personage on the political stage—to Free-trade, economy, peace, a popular franchise of the old kind, the ballot; and enthusiasm for these causes is really in him political Conservatism. And the manner of his advocacy is as Conservative as the matter. He always addresses the political affections rather than the political reason, and this is no doubt the great secret of his true popularity. The creed of the Mr. Bright

of 1876 is probably far less altered from the creed of the Mr. Bright of 1840 than is the creed of the Duke of Richmond of 1876 from the creed of the same peer in 1840. The Duke of Richmond has reluctantly abandoned many articles of his old creed—Mr. Bright has abandoned none.

## THE CENTENARY OF THE "WEALTH OF NATIONS".

(*From "The Economist," 3rd June*, 1876.)

THE *Wealth of Nations* which was published in 1776, is this year just a hundred years old, and the English Political Economy Club gave on Wednesday a dinner in celebration of the fact, at which they had the remarkable honour of entertaining the French Minister of Finance, who came from Paris for the purpose, and who made on the occasion a most admirable and suitable speech. No compliment could have been more suitable for a dinner in celebration of the beginning of the most effectual of political philosophies, and the one which has by far the most affected the intercourse of nations.

Nothing beforehand—nothing if we look at the matter with the eyes, say, of the year 1770, could have seemed more unlikely than that Adam Smith should have succeeded in such an achievement. Political economy is, above all things, the theory of business, and if ever there was an eminent man who pre-eminently was not a man of business it was Adam Smith. He was a bookish student who never made a sixpence, who was unfit for all sorts of affairs, and whose absence of mind is hardly credible. He once astonished a sentinel who did him some kind of military salute by drawing himself up and giving with perfect gravity a facsimile salute in return. On another occasion, when he had to put his signature to an official document, instead of doing so he copied with slow and elaborate care the name of the person who had signed before him. And these acts are but specimens of his life. If the townsmen of Kirkcaldy—the little place where the *Wealth of Nations* was written—had been told to select the townsman who was most unlikely, as far as externals went, to tell this world how to

make money, most likely they would have selected Adam Smith, whose writings have, in fact, caused more money to be made, and prevented more money from being wasted, than those of any other author.

That there had been various preceding political economies, more than the common world much remembers, rather enhances the wonder. Unquestionably, many hardheaded men, and some sects of writers, can be mentioned who approached more or less nearly to the general doctrines now accepted as the true theory of commerce. What sort of "natural selection," then, made Adam Smith's political economy so much more successful than that of all others? Why was this most unlikely-looking Scotch student the "favoured" philosopher whose name was to be annexed for all time to the true theory of trade?

One great piece of good fortune to Adam Smith was his time. Historians of science remark that most great discoveries are based on large collections of new facts. And this was the case with trade in the eighteenth century. There was then a much vaster, a much wider, and much more varied commerce than the world had ever seen in any preceding time. And its contents were catalogued and were commented upon in a quantity and with an accuracy which there had been nothing like before. "Political Arithmetic," as statistics were then called, was no doubt then very small in comparison with the mass of figures to which it has grown now; but still it existed, and existed for the first time—at least, in any connected bulk—and that existence was a sign of the recent extension of commerce and of the changed place it began to take in men's minds. Adam Smith was singularly fortunate among philosophers, for he had a new world to explain and new data for explaining it.

And he had also a world to conquer. The new commerce which had grown up had done so in spite of any law which could be framed to prevent it—not that such had been in the least the intention of legislators. On the contrary, they were most anxious to develop trade, and to make the nations rich which were subject to them; but they had pursued a wrong,

though very natural, method. Seemingly, the most obvious person to consult on matters of trade, is the trader; the person who, at first sight, seems likely to know most about a thing, is the person who makes it; and, accordingly, the European Governments had taken counsel with the producer. But, unhappily, the producer was just the wrong person to consult. What he wanted was a high price for his article, and a monopoly of the market in which to sell it; and the laws he recommended were inevitably framed, more or less, to obtain his wishes; whereas, the interest of the nations which the Governments were trustees for, and which they were sincerely desirous to serve, was a "low price," unrestricted competition from abroad, and a freedom for every one to buy or sell everything at home. The legislative success of Adam Smith's philosophy has transcended that of all other philosophers very much from this. He found a world in which the interests of the buyer were supposed to be secured by laws, framed at the suggestion of the seller, and he was able to show, not by mere elaborate argument—though he gave that too—but also by an unsurpassed store of living illustrations, that these laws worked ill, and were sure to do so, because they were framed in the wrong person's interest. To use a homely illustration, Adam Smith was so fortunate as to find a world in "which the cat had the custody of the cream," and to have had unprecedented facilities for showing the absurdity of the arrangement.

And when we look more closely at the matter, we find notwithstanding the outside impression, that he was a person singularly fitted to do this. He belonged to what—calling the group from the representative most familiar to us—we may call "the Macaulay type of Scotchmen". He possessed in combination—exactly that power of lucid exposition, that eager interest in his subject, that immense power of illustrating it from all quarters, and that hard kind of predominant—we might almost say—intolerant common sense, of which every reader of Mr. Trevelyan's excellent biography will just now have in his mind an almost perfect specimen. Many persons are now deterred from reading the *Wealth of Nations* by the dulness of modern books on Political Economy, but most of it

really consists of some of the most striking and graphic writing in the language. And its defect, like that of several other great works of the eighteenth century, is rather that it tries to make its subject more interesting than it ought to be, and not to dwell on the dull standpoints of the truth, though these are often the most important parts of all. But perhaps for its peculiar time and purpose this defect was almost a merit. It gained a hearing from the mass of mankind, who always think they ought to be able to understand even the most complex subjects with little effort, and so brought home approximate truth to those most concerned in its application. A student familiar with abstractions may prefer teaching like Ricardo's, which begins in dry principles, and which goes with unabbreviated reasoning to conclusions that are as dry. But such students are very rare. Teaching like Adam Smith's, imperfect and external as from its method it is, vitally changes the minds and maxims of thousands to whom an abstract treatise is intolerable.

Three other circumstances, too, helped on Adam Smith. First—He was educated in England—educated, we mean, as a young man; and though Oxford may have taught him little of book learning in comparison with what she ought, as he always said she did, she gave him—for he lived there several years—a sort of familiarity with English things, and of sympathy with English life, which the Scotchmen of that day often wanted. Anyone who will compare Hume's way of treating an English subject with Adam Smith's, will at once feel the contrast. Hume without disguise hates the whole thing; Adam Smith—though, no doubt, even in him there are unextinguished vestiges of the old feud between the countries—abounds in kindly understanding, and seems always to remember that he spent a happy youth in England, though possibly not one of the elaborate book-training which he coveted.

Secondly—Adam Smith lived for years in Glasgow, then even a commercial city of intelligence, and was a member of a club of merchants, "in which the express design was to inquire into the nature and principles of trade in all its

branches, and to communicate their knowledge on that subject to each other". A set of strongheaded merchants, trained as the Scotchmen have ever since the Reformation been, in abstract reasoning, would be sure to argue out something near to Free-trade—and tradition preserves the name of a certain "Provost Cochrane," to whom Adam Smith always said he was under great obligations. This club and the atmosphere of Glasgow life, probably taught him more than he was aware of, not so much in the way of definite ideas and conclusions, as in the way of "putting business things," so that men of business can understand them—an art which a man cannot learn in his study, for books will never teach it, but which Adam Smith pre-eminently possessed, and which is an essential prerequisite to his characteristic work. Lastly—Adam Smith resided in France a considerable time in middle life, which not only brought him into contact with the French *Économistes*, who had like him, a Free-trade doctrine, and traces of whose influence curiously leavening the original Scotch substance of the thought, are everywhere to be found in the *Wealth of Nations*, but also generally widened his culture, excited his mind, and in those days of the old *régime*, introduced him to an almost complete specimen of commercial morbid anatomy on the greatest scale, showing how a treasury which ought to be full might be made empty, and how a nation which ought to have been rich and happy might be made and kept poor and miserable.

As far as England is concerned, most of the legislative effects of the work of Adam Smith are complete. He thought the adoption of a Free-trade legislation as unlikely as the creation of a "Utopia," but yet it has been established. The fetters in which pre-existing laws bound our commerce have been removed, and the result is that we possess the greatest, the most stable, and the most lucrative commerce which the world has ever seen. Deep as was Adam Smith's conviction of the truth of his principles, the history of England for the last thirty years would have been almost inconceivable to him. Thirty years ago Carlyle and Arnold had nearly convinced the world of the irrecoverable poverty of our lower

classes. The "condition of England question," as they termed it, was bringing us fast to ruin. But, in fact, we were on the eve of the greatest prosperity which we have ever seen, or perhaps any other nation. And it was to the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, and to the series of changes of which this was the type, and the most important, that we owe this wonderful contrast. The nature and the direction of the result Adam Smith would have unquestionably accepted; but the magnitude and the rapidity—the "figures and the pace"—would have been far beyond his imagination. Even to us, with the aid of our modern experience of large transactions, they are amazing, and no mind trained in the comparatively slow and small school of the eighteenth century would, a hundred years since, have been able to think them possible.

In almost all other countries much remains to be done in the alteration of the laws in the way that Adam Smith would have suggested. The English race have gone into many countries, and have there done many wonderful things, but they have not been able to take their Free-trade principles with them. Everywhere "Protection" rises like a weed from the soil; the wish to consult, and the habit of being guided by the producer, are as strong in the United States in 1876 as ever they were in England in 1776; and almost all our colonies partake the same spirit. Probably no one can overestimate the loss of wealth and the diminution of happiness which this unhappy ignorance causes. A rational tariff in America would have done more indirectly to make American industry stable and prosperous, and directly to advance the growth of wealth and industry, than anything else which could be named. And yet an irrational and pernicious tariff seems fixed upon the United States for many years.

In Europe there has not been for many years any symptom of commercial progress so good as the presence of M. Léon Say—the French Finance Minister—at Adam Smith's festival. The circumstances of France are for the moment very difficult; a very large revenue must be raised, and in this case, as in all similar ones, much of it will have to be raised not in the best way. But it is much that the guidance of such immense

affairs should be in the hands of one who is thoroughly imbued with wise opinions, and much that they should no longer be at the mercy of M. Thiers, the last statesman in Europe, perhaps, who avers that he is "a Protectionist on principle," and who only wishes that the "tall chimnies" of some favoured producer should smoke and thrive, no matter at what cost to the consumer, or at what ruin to other industries.

And though in England the legislative work of Adam Smith has nearly come to an end, there is much else which we have yet to learn from him,—at any rate, from the spirit of his teaching, if not from its letter. Though a political economist, he was not a mere economist—or, rather, he was the antithesis of one as we now think of him. Great as his work has been, he said, with much melancholy, not long before his death, "I meant to have done more". The *Wealth of Nations* was but a part of a much larger work in which he meant to treat something like what we should now call the "evolution" of human society and of human improvement. He discovered, as it has been put, "the natural progress of opulence while looking for the natural progress of all things". And he was disappointed to think that he finished so little of so great a scheme. In this critics, instructed by longer experience, will not agree with him. These great plans are the bane of philosophy; "the master mind," as has been profoundly said, "shows itself in limitation," and, fortunate as Adam Smith was in many ways, it is his greatest good fortune that fate constrained and compelled him to it. But, nevertheless, this wider design in which the *Wealth of Nations* began, is one of its peculiar features and one which we now-a-days much want Adam Smith to complete. The world is too much divided between economists, who think only of "wealth," and of sentimentalists, who are never so sure they are right as when they differ from what political economy teaches. Now of course it is true that there are some things, though not many things, more important than money, and a nation may well be called on to abandon the maxims which would produce the most money, for others which would promote some of these better ends. The case is much like that of health in the body.

There are unquestionable circumstances in which a man may be called on to endanger and to sacrifice his health at some call of duty. But for all that bodily health is a most valuable thing, and the advice of the physician as to the best way of keeping it is very much to be heeded, and in the same way, though the wealth is occasionally to be foregone, and the ordinary rules of industry abandoned, yet still national wealth is in itself and in its connections a great end, and economists who teach us how to arrive at it are most useful. Nor were they ever so useful as now, when there is a tendency to magnify the occasional exceptions to their doctrines into the rule. Their teaching, being based on hard fact, is often most painful to human nature, and accordingly in every age a whole race of socialists will gainsay and oppose it. They are like pleasant doctors who teach people to eat and drink too much, only they have higher pretensions, and say you must not think of health only; there are things which are higher than health, and so they appeal at once to the higher aspirations of humanity and to its lower weaknesses. We must not be deluded into thinking that the characteristic work of Adam Smith is over because the laws of which he disapproved are repealed. Perhaps there never was a time in which we more needed to combine a stern and homely sagacity resembling his, with the far-reaching aims and ample knowledge for which he was so remarkable.

## MR. JOHN MORLEY ON EDUCATION.

(*From "The Economist," 14th October*, 1876.)

MR. JOHN MORLEY'S address to the Midland Institute, last week, was not only singularly able, but what is very much less common in relation to educational addresses, singularly pleasant reading. There is probably no subject in the world on which a very great amount of human capacity is concentrated, about which it is so dull to read. Mr. Morley quoted a Birmingham friend's advice to him on the subject of his address thus:—"Pray talk about anything you please, if it is only not education";—a good piece of advice, if considered without relation to the particular person to whom it was addressed; but, like most other good advice, neglected, and as it happens in this case at least, fortunately neglected. Perhaps the reason why the subject of education is usually so dull, is this—that those for whose benefit education is discussed are not qualified to take part in the discussion. There is always a certain amount of vivacity to be expected in the discussion of any subject, however intrinsically dull, on which there are opposing interests, or interests which believe themselves to be opposed to each other,—so that a success on either side is felt as a blow or a defeat to the other side. Now children and wholly uneducated adults cannot make their views known on the subject of education, and though, if they could, there would undoubtedly be much to learn from them, probably their views would not be altogether sound. Hence those who lay down the law about education are not stimulated and restrained by the expectation of that criticism enlivened by strong personal interest, which on any other subject they would expect. And so it happens that there is, perhaps, no subject except Social Science—which is a kind of diluted education—

on which the ordinary speakers are so pompous and dull. It is not so with Mr. John Morley. He speaks with all that vivacity of sympathy with the subjects of educational experiment, which a vivid fancy and a certain benevolent feeling towards ignorance—as one of the worst kinds of poverty—could give him. No doubt in his address he was thinking much more of the education of adults than of the education of children. Still he might have been as pompous and dull as he chose to be without fearing a reply; and he was neither pompous nor dull, but very simple and very lively. And his address was full of good sense, though there are a few incidental remarks in it with which we should differ. There was in the advice given plenty of the kind of wisdom proper to a shrewd man who, regularly educated as Mr. Morley has been, has yet been continually in the habit of striking out new lines of study for himself, and whose habit it has been to watch closely the shortcomings of the world in which he lives, as well as to supply his own intellectual deficiencies so soon as he perceives them. Let us observe some of the points on which his advice was not only strikingly given, but peculiarly useful to working men.

Let us begin with his advice in relation to the study of history. He points out that what the study of history does is to enlarge the mind indefinitely as to the varieties of human nature and of human society, the vicissitudes possible to nations, the very limited significance of the political struggles of which we are apt to make, in some senses, too much, though perhaps in others, too little—in short, to make us see the relations of the social and political world in which we live to other very different social and political worlds now in existence, and to many more which are in existence no longer. Mr. Morley is quite right in believing that this enlarging effect of historical studies is specially needed for men whose chief energy is given to one particular kind of work in one particular corner of a small kingdom, and that the want of it accounts not unfrequently for the chief deficiencies in societies like those of the United States—and he might have added of Switzerland—which are chiefly composed, and wholly governed, by people who are

deficient in this large knowledge. "When I was on a visit to the United States, some years ago," says Mr. Morley,—"things may have improved since then—I could not help noticing that the history classes in their common schools all began their work with the year 1776, when the American colonies formed themselves into an independent confederacy. The teaching assumed that the creation of the universe occurred about that date. What could be more absurd, more narrow and narrowing, more mischievously misleading as to the whole purport and significance of history? As if the laws, the representative institutions, the religious uses, the scientific methods, the moral ideas, which give to an American citizen his character and mental habits, and social surroundings, had not all their roots in the deeds and thoughts of wise and brave men, who lived in centuries which are of course just as much the inheritance of the vast continent of the West as they are of the little island from whence its first colonists sailed forth." And Mr. Morley adds, frankly enough, that there is something almost as absurd "in our common plan of taking for granted that people should begin their reading of history not in 1776, but in 1066". The truth is, that not a little of the narrowness and feebleness of politicians in countries ruled by great democracies, is due to the complete ignorance of history among their constituencies, and the tendency of working men to think that just principles of political action can be established from first principles by a few minutes' consideration. The great humorist of the United States well represented that narrowness to which Mr. Morley has alluded, in relation to his own countrymen, when he said that "the earth continued her rotation on her axis subject to the Constitution of the United States". But in a different way, unquestionably, the English working man and the English shopkeeper, and many above either class in social station, are the victims of similar delusions —are apt, for instance, to suppose that life in the East is subject to the same sort of conditions, and will be benefited by the same sort of "reforms," as life in constitutional England. The best of all studies—not so much for the minute knowledge of facts it brings, as for its enlarging influence on the mind,

especially in the case of persons who have no time or means for travel—is the study of history. Mr. Morley's exhortation, "Learn not to be near-sighted in history," is needed by almost all classes in England, from the artisans up to members of both Houses of Parliament.

Then, again, what could be more admirable than Mr. Morley's advice as to the study of principles of evidence. Perhaps there is nothing in the world which average men and women—very little which even the most educated men and women—understand less than their own liability to mistake, and there is nothing which it is more difficult to teach them. As Mr. Morley says, most of us are "very bad hands at estimating evidence even when appeal can be made to actual eyesight," but it is still worse when the sort of facts on which you have to pronounce judgment are more complex. How little competent ordinary Englishmen were to estimate the principles of evidence, was very powerfully illustrated by the popular impressions of the Tichborne case—the claimant's popularity being unquestionably due to a confused acceptance by the masses of two quite contradictory assumptions, (1) that he was the heir to the Tichborne estates ; (2) that he had been a butcher, and the son of a butcher. Every day and every hour shows the danger and the multiplicity of popular fallacies, but Mr. John Morley's suggestion for teaching in an effective way a little self-distrust in matters of this kind, seems to us as original as it is valuable. He suggests that a dozen or a score of cases might be selected from *Smith's Leading Cases*, and published in a small volume, for the purpose of serving as a textbook on the principles of evidence in popular matters. The judgment given in these cases sets forth the decision arrived at with the grounds of that decision, and it would be very easy to select cases in which the danger of popular fallacies, "the pitfalls," as Mr. Morley calls them, to which the judgment of ordinary men is liable, might be very graphically set forth. Such a textbook commented on to a class by a man trained to estimate the value of evidence, would form a most valuable study, and not, we should imagine, at all less fascinating than valuable. Of course the class sug-

gested would not be a class in English law, but in the principles on which evidence should be estimated, and the special errors to which, in common life, average minds are most liable. We regard this suggestion of Mr. Morley's as a most useful one, and as one which would not only greatly contribute to the educational worth of an institute for adults, but also to its popularity. The whole address was full of vigorous remarks to which we have no space to allude, but the two bits of practical counsel to which we have referred in detail, seem to us of no common importance, and were urged with a vivacity and lucidity which are likely enough to make a serious impression on the management of adult colleges all over England.

## WHAT SHOULD NOT BE THE POLICY OF ENGLAND IN THE EAST.

(*From "The Economist,"* 21*st October*, 1876.)

THE decisive moment seems to be fast arriving, and England will probably very soon have to determine what is to be her policy in the East of Europe. It is urged on the one hand, that we ought to go to war to save Turkey, or part of Turkey, and on the other hand, that we ought to go to war to destroy Turkey, and to form some new rule that shall be better for her subjects instead of hers. And we must consider what is said for each of these courses.

On behalf of the first, it is said that England, in 1856, guaranteed the integrity of the Ottoman Empire from external harm; that we expressly promised her, if any foreign State should attack her, to help her if required, and that we did so with an especial view to the very contingency which has now arisen—an attack by Russia. If, it is argued, Treaty promises are to mean anything, we are bound to help Turkey now with all our power. And it cannot be doubted that we did so promise; the words of the Treaty are as clear as any words can be, and there is no doubt that these words exactly express our intention at the time they were used. But this is not conclusive. Just as all private promises are subject to a certain exact limitation of time, however widely they may be worded, so Treaty promises are subject to a certain vague limitation by circumstances. An English statute of limitations says that we are not to sue a man on a bill or note after six years; and the rules of international obligation say that no nation is bound to perform a Treaty when the facts which it contemplated have wholly changed. Eternal promises, whether private or public, are impossible in a changing world. And certainly the change

in the position of Turkey since 1856 is very great; sufficient, probably, to destroy the force of a Treaty promise if any change is to be allowed to do so. In 1856, the possession of Turkey by Russia would have been a serious menace to Europe, and especially to the freedom of Europe, to which she was hostile. But now the rise of Germany has so completely protected Europe against Russia, that it does not at all matter in this respect whether she takes Turkey or not; even if she does, Germany will still be an infinitely stronger power than she is. The principal motive for which we gave the guarantee no longer operates; even the very idea of it has almost passed out of memory. And as respects Turkey herself, the circumstances have changed much also. In 1856 it was still possible to hope that she would reform herself—that she would improve in money matters—that she would govern her country better, and, above all, treat her Christian subjects better. But Turkey, instead of reforming, has deteriorated. Her finances are worse than in 1856, her Government being weaker and worse for all good purposes; and as for her Christian subjects, we need not inquire how she treats them. The Bulgarian atrocities answer for that. Strong, therefore, as the treaty obligation to defend Turkey seems, and express as the words creating it are, we do not hesitate distinctly to say that we think it ought entirely to be disregarded, because the international statute of limitations has destroyed its binding power.

Secondly, it is said that, promise or no promise, we must keep up Turkey, or else Russia will obtain Constantinople. And no doubt the probability is that, if Turkey falls, Russia will obtain Constantinople—in fact, if not in name. No adequate force can be found to keep her out, instead of the Turks, who have so long done so. A set of Sclavonian, or Greek, or Roumanian States, if put in the place of Turkey, will be as powerless against her as Servia, Greece, and Roumania now are. There will be no fighting power in them, and if in a war Russia wants Constantinople she will be always able to take it for all which they can do. One premiss of this argument is good; if we want to keep Russia out of Constantinople we must keep the Turks in it, for they are the only effectual

garrison which we can set to hold it. But the other premiss cannot be proved. No one has ever proved that Constantinople is so important to England as to justify a war, or a series of wars, in its behalf. It may be somewhat better for England that Russia should not have it; our commerce in the Black Sea may be more secure; our communications with India rather more certain. But these are insufficient benefits to justify a war. If you draw up a debit and credit account—the immense balance will be for peace. The cost of keeping Russia out of Constantinople is worse than the harm of letting her have it. Indeed, the notion that any great harm will happen in consequence is mainly a remnant of the old idea that Russia is already so great a power that Europe needs to be afraid of her. But as we have seen, that idea belongs to the pre-Germanic age, we need not now think of or regard it. Out of interest we need not fight for Turkey any more than from duty.

Some people say that without defending Turkey we should see that Constantinople is made a free city, under the guarantee of the five Powers; and that we should go to war, if necessary, to ensure this. And here, again, we admit that this guarantee might in itself be good. But we deny that it is worth a war. Indeed, probably, like most other guarantees, it would be found worth little when wanted. The only Power which has a great interest in making Constantinople a free city is England; and only a very sanguine mind can imagine Germany or Austria, or any great State of the continent, enforcing contracts by which England will gain and they will not. Such disinterested virtue is no part of international morality, as they understand it, and no object of a war can be more infinitesimal than the attainment of a paper promise, which only such virtue will perform.

It is sometimes also said that England must prevent Russia from being a naval power in the Mediterranean, must shut her into the Black Sea, and deny her the free use of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. But we deny that England has any such interest. There are already several other foreign fleets in the Mediterranean, against which England must, if

necessary, hold her own, and it matters little to her if one more be added to them. And there is something monstrous, or, as Mr. Gladstone would say, anti-human, in the idea that the people who live on the Black Sea should not be allowed to use its outlets, because their doing so, perhaps, may lessen the naval power of a distant island. The harm done is quite incommensurate with the gain alleged.

It has also been suggested that, by way of precaution, we should occupy Constantinople now or soon, and hold it as a "material guarantee" for the security of English interests. But we must consider, too, that any Power which seizes on Constantinople now will probably have to remain there as long as human foresight can pretend to look. That Power will find the Turk in possession, and when it goes, it must reinstate him, or find some substitute, and it will be impossible to do either—for us, at any rate—for we should never now put back the Turk, nor could the mixed populations of Mohammedans and Christians which he has governed provide any form of government with which we should be, or with which we ought to be, satisfied. An occupation of Constantinople by us now would mean its occupation for an indefinite period, and that occupation could not be confined only to Constantinople any more than the Indian Empire could be confined to Calcutta. The inevitable law which compels highly civilised nations to conquer their semi-civilised neighbours would operate in this case as in others.

And if by the security of English interests is meant the preservation of our naval supremacy in the Mediterranean, and the consequent safety of the road to India, what is proposed is the wrong remedy. If our naval power in the Mediterranean is not sufficiently great we must augment it, and it will be far easier and cheaper to do so than to occupy Constantinople or any part of the territory of Turkey. We see what is the cost of augmenting our navy, but we cannot at all calculate the result of beginning war on Turkish land, or of beginning to govern any fragment of it.

And we need not now at all discuss whether England should fight for the possession of Egypt or not. Egypt is not, for

such purposes as we now have in hand, an integral part of the Turkish empire; she is only a tributary subject to a quit rent; if Turkey were to break up and she were to become independent, the existing state of things would be so very little changed that England would scarcely lose anything. And as to attempts on Egypt by Russia, or any other Power, they are no part of our present, Eastern politics, which in themselves are so complicated that we need not look out for difficulties which do not belong to them.

For these reasons we think it manifest that England ought not to go to war for Turkey; and we must now see if England ought to go to war against her. For so doing it is often said that England has undertaken by Treaty to see after the rights of her Christian subjects—that she violates these rights, and that she must take the consequences. But we have lately shown at length that this idea of a Treaty duty is a mistake, and the Treaty of Paris, so far from saying that the Powers who signed it should have a right to interfere for the Turkish Christians, says expressly that they shall have no right. That Treaty was framed to prevent in future such attempts at interference as had just caused the Crimean war, and nothing, therefore, could be less in its way than to lay the foundation for new attempts.

Then it is said that as England maintained the Turkish Empire in 1855, England is responsible for the atrocities Turkey has now committed in Bulgaria. But, as we have before shown, such atrocities were the inevitable incidents of the break-up of the Turkish Empire—happen when it might. Twenty years ago they would have happened, and been much worse—if Turkey had not then been maintained. The utmost that can be said is that we are responsible, for we then prolonged the existence of a bad Government, and, therefore, we ought to see that the subjects of it get a good one instead. But the answer to this is that we have no power to do so. The Christian subjects of Turkey are scattered through many provinces—in Asia and Europe. The duty which we have applies equally to them all, and performing it as to them all is impossible. Even in the provinces near the Danube, which have

been so much spoken of, we have no means of establishing a good form of Government. The fate of these provinces is entirely in the hands of the great military Empires in their neighbourhood. What they choose to say as to them must be done, and we cannot alter it. If it suits the purpose of any of them to patch up a temporary independent State, they will no doubt be very happy to get a guarantee for that independence from England. But we shall have no power of giving effect to that guarantee, and it will be only a burden for us without really benefiting any one. To put the matter plainly, if we now went to war with Russia against Turkey, during the war Russia would take these provinces, at the peace she would keep them, and we could not get at them. We may have done wrong in 1854 in postponing the ruin of Turkey, but that ruin will bring awful evils when it comes, which at least the present generation have been spared by what we did. We shall only do further evil if we now interfere with events which we cannot regulate, and of which all we know is that their issue will be tremendous.

We think, therefore, that England ought to keep clear from the impending struggle, and not to interfere with it on either side. But we are not at all sure that she will be able to do so. On the one hand, some old ideas urge her to help Turkey, and other old ideas urge her to take Constantinople, either of which would be opposing Russia ; and, on the other hand, an overpowering new sentiment makes her wish to interfere to improve the state of the Turkish Christians, which would be to help Russia. Any accident at any moment may augment either of these already strong forces, till it becomes overpoweringly great, and may draw us into the conflict.

## THE PRINCE CONSORT AND LORD PALMERSTON.

(*From "The Economist," 4th November*, 1876.)

MR. MARTIN'S *Life of the Prince Consort* has been published so soon after Mr. Evelyn Ashley's *Life of Lord Palmerston*, and the two books so often refer to the same political transactions, that no one can read them both without being tempted into a comparison of the two men, both as speculative and as practical statesmen. Indeed, the comparison is in many respects very instructive. Lord Palmerston was one of those statesmen of very mature years whom the process of "natural selection," as it is applied in the conflicts of parliamentary life, had brought to the head of affairs, —a man of singular tenacity and vigour of will, and of very considerable self-will, who understood well the world and its ways, who had much careless humour, a most active ambition, and plenty of *savoir-faire*, but who was never a very considerate politician, one rather who scrambled his way into a policy and scrambled his way out of it again without either looking forward very much, to avoid making a mistake, or back very much after he had made one, but who fought his way through his difficulties with a good deal of valour and a very hand-to-mouth species of reflectiveness. The Prince Consort on the other hand was a young man who, though carefully educated for his position, had had no sifting in the battle of life, and perhaps hardly had at any time the physique requisite to bear a very hard sifting of that kind; he was not wanting in such knowledge of the world as a life spent among Courts and a naturally observant nature give, but he wanted that ease and carelessness of manner which are so much more effective in inoculating men of the world with new ideas and aims, than are the most carefully prepared arrays of reasons,

But he was a very considerate politician, who always took pains to master the general principles which governed the political conditions of any problem before him, and very seldom made any mistake as to the character of those principles. There was not a trace in the Prince of either the animal buoyancy of Lord Palmerston, or the political self-will which so often accompanies that kind of buoyancy. He was always ready to renounce his own wishes, eager to look at every question in as purely impartial a light as it would admit of, and desirous so to shape the course taken, that it would not hamper the highest policy of the future. He would have done more, we think, practically to mould the policy of England than he did if he had seemed to be a little less painstaking, and had imperceptibly infected, rather than directly indoctrinated, the statesmen around him with the results of his sagacious and careful reflections. It is evident from Mr. Martin's life that he had not the knack of dropping seed without appearing to sow it—which is an important art for a Prince who has to deal with tough old statesmen of wills as headstrong and habits as fixed as Lord Palmerston's. But though he may not have had the best knack of carrying his own way, his way was apt to be not infrequently very much better worth carrying than that of the statesmen whom he chiefly tried to influence. Especially was this the case in relation to foreign policy. The Prince Consort had some of the cosmopolitan culture which fitted him to view these questions from a point of view above that of our insular interests. Lord Palmerston, on the contrary, was very apt to have no notion of a Foreign Office question, except that which he had got from looking at it like an Englishman, and discussing it, and hearing it discussed in Parliament. He did not ask himself, as the Prince Consort always did, what a policy would lead to—whether it could be consistently developed and carried out—what, in fact, it really implied, and whether what it implied was something which it was worth our while to battle for steadily and with set purpose. When Lord Palmerston as an Englishman received a shock, he immediately felt the importance of making the person who

caused it receive a shock in return, and if possible, a worse shock than had been given; and so his diplomacy sometimes amounted to very little more than the part of a valiant diplomatic boxer, who was likely enough to get the best of the game at which he was playing, but had no sort of security that when he had got the best of it he should not be found to have secured for himself and for his country a very doubtful advantage, if not an inheritance of positive mischief.

Of course, the best illustration we can give of this power of the Prince to understand a great question far better than the Minister whose mind he would have impressed, if he could, with his own larger view, is the memorandum which he wrote when Turkey had declared war on Russia in 1853, and the Prince, presuming that we should be drawn into taking part with Turkey, was doing his best to impress on the Queen's Ministers the grave responsibility of such a step; and especially the great danger that it might commit us to a general support of Turkish policy instead of that very limited and conditional support of Turkey against external aggression, to which he was so anxious to limit it. His words are words which can hardly be now read by any English statesman of that day to whom they were submitted without producing a certain sense of shame, if not self-reproach, that they did not effect more in the way of warning us from a dangerous policy, and guiding us into a wise one. "In acting," he said, "as auxiliaries to the Turks, we ought to be quite sure that *they* have no object in view *foreign* to our duty and interests; that they do not drive at war while we aim at peace; that they do not, instead of merely resisting the attempt of Russia to obtain a Protectorate over the Greek population, incompatible with their own independence, seek to obtain themselves the power of imposing a more oppressive rule of two millions of fanatic Mussulmen, over twelve millions of Christians; that they do not try to turn the tables upon the weaker power, now that, backed by England and France, they have themselves become the stronger. There can be little doubt, and it is very natural, that the fanatic party at Constantinople should have such views; but to engage our fleet as an auxiliary force for such purposes

would be fighting against our own interests, policy, and feelings. From this it would result, that if our forces are to be employed for any purpose, however defensive, as an auxiliary to Turkey, we *must insist* upon keeping not only the conduct of the negotiation, but also the power of peace and war in our own hands, and that Turkey refusing this, we can no longer take part *for her*. It will be said that England and Europe have a strong interest, setting all Turkish considerations aside, that Constantinople and the Turkish territory should not fall into the hands of Russia, and that they should, in the last extremity, even go to war to prevent such an overthrow of the balance of power. This must be admitted, and such a war may be right and wise. But this would be a war, not for the maintenance of the *integrity of the Ottoman Empire*, but merely for the interests of the European powers and of civilisation. It ought to be carried on unshackled by obligations to the Porte, and will probably lead, in the peace which must be the object of that war, to the obtaining of arrangements more consonant with the well-understood interests of Europe, of Christianity, liberty, and civilisation, than the reimposition of the ignorant, barbarian, and despotic yoke of the Mussulman over the most fertile and favoured provinces of Europe."

It is sufficiently evident from Lord Palmerston's reply to this memorandum, how far in advance of Lord Palmerston was the Prince Consort in his conception of the true character of the Ottoman rule, and the danger to be apprehended from giving it artificial support. Lord Palmerston's mind at the time was riveted on one point, and one point alone—the excessive pretensions and ambition of Russia. He had no room in his mind for any second idea. He had not, like the Prince Consort, the power of looking to other almost inevitable consequences of the war he was contemplating, besides the one which he wished to bring about,—consequences which would be, in all probability, as mischievous as those on which his attention was centred might have been beneficial. In his communication, addressed to Lord Aberdeen, on the Prince Consort's memorandum, he writes thus :—

" It is said also that the Turks are re-awakening the dor-

mant fanaticism of the Mussulman race, and that we ought not to be helping instruments to gratify such bad passions. I believe these stories about awakened fanaticism to be fables invented at Vienna and Petersburg; we have had no facts stated in support of them. I take the fanaticism which has been thus aroused to be the fanaticism which consists in burning indignation at a national insult, and a daring impatience to endeavour to expel an invading enemy. This spirit may be reviled by the Russians, whose schemes it disconcerts, and may be cried down by the Austrians, who had hoped to settle matters by persuading the Turks to yield, but it will not diminish the goodwill of the people of England, and it is a good foundation on which to build our hopes of success." No more shortsighted passage was ever written by an able statesman; but much of Lord Palmerston's action at the time was even more one-sided and cavalier still. For example, before even Turkey had declared war at all,—and of course, long before England and France had declared war, which was not till several months later,—Lord Palmerston wrote to Lord Aberdeen (on 7th October, 1853) saying, that he wished to propose to the Cabinet, "first, that instructions should be sent to Constantinople that in the event of war having been declared" [by Turkey] "the two squadrons should enter the Black Sea, and should send word to the Russian Admiral at Sebastopol that, in the existing state of things, any Russian ship of war found cruising in the Black Sea would be detained, and given over to the Turkish Government". A rasher and more violent proposal could hardly be imagined. Of course we now know that war between the Allies and Russia was not avoided, and we are apt to think that even then it was inevitable. But at the time the statesmen of the day were clearly bound to consider all the best means by which it could be avoided, and the Russian aggression nevertheless repelled—and of such means it is perfectly clear that Lord Palmerston's violent and self-willed proposal was not one. A better recipe for ensuring war between the Western Powers and Russia than the proposal which Lord Palmerston desired to press upon the Cabinet could hardly have been imagined. Indeed, if Lord

Aberdeen contributed to bring on the war by too great hesitancy, we can all admit now that his excuse was great in having for his Foreign Minister a colleague whose impulses were so obviously violent and self-willed, and not marked by the reticence and self-control of a true statesman. On the whole, no thoughtful man will compare the statesmanship of the Prince Consort during the years 1853-54 with the statesmanship of Lord Palmerston, without some sense of regret that the more farsighted, the more sober, and the more effectually self-controlled statesman did not gain the ascendancy which he deserved over the far more impetuous and imperious, though much older adviser, who at that time guided the policy of England.

## CARDINAL ANTONELLI.

(*From "The Economist," 11th November*, 1876.)

We have never been able to feel, or even entirely to understand, the sort of loathing admiration for Cardinal Antonelli usually expressed by both the Liberal and Protestant worlds. Among Englishmen in particular, he has been accepted as the embodiment of the priestly wiliness, which of all bad qualities they hate most; but while he was never a priest, having for some unknown reason abstained from taking full orders, there is no proof that he possessed any supernatural degree of wiliness. The secret memoirs of the period will one day tell us much more about him; but, subject always to their future revelations, Cardinal Antonelli does not strike us as a very remarkable man, but only a rather belated specimen of a class of statesmen once very common in Europe, and especially common in the annals of the Roman Church—men who thought that the best way to protect States, and great organisations of all kinds, was to alter as little as possible, to divide their dangerous enemies, and to exert as much influence as possible over important and hostile individuals. He believed, in fact, in intrigue, at a time when more than intrigue was needed for the safety of his charge—the Temporal Power—and even in intrigue he did not succeed very well. He neither destroyed, nor defeated, nor paralysed any great enemy of the Papacy; on the contrary, he alienated a great many possible allies. It was of the highest importance to the Temporal Power to show that the Papacy could—allowance being made for its ideas—govern the States of the Church very well, and Cardinal Antonelli governed them very badly—so badly as to excite in the States themselves great discontent, and in Europe a deep contempt for clerical maladministration. It was of

the greatest importance to the Papacy to recognise that new powers had arisen in the world stronger than Kings, Courts, or armies, and to the last Cardinal Antonelli thought that to win the favour of Kings, Courts, and armies was to succeed, and did not win it. He might easily have made an alliance with the Russian Government, and he only exasperated it; he might repeatedly have arrived at a *modus vivendi* with Cavour, and he only resisted him; he made the support which Napoleon III. was forced to accord to the Vatican a galling annoyance to him, and he irritated the new Power—Germany—into measures indistinguishable from persecution. It may be said, of course, that much of his failure was due to his master, the Pope, a man of a very peculiar, though intelligible character, but Cardinal Antonelli had the Pope's full confidence, and if possessed of the qualities with which he was credited, he ought to have been able to manage an old gentleman whom he quite understood, and who was not so able as himself. No one can produce a despatch from Cardinal Antonelli of a first-rate kind, one which altered events or modified the policy of rulers, or produced any impression except of a certain adroitness and polish in its writer. The Cardinal had no doubt great tenacity, but it was only because he desired always the same object, and thought always it could be obtained in the same way, and therefore held obstinately to his line, which very often was not a wise one. It is very difficult to doubt, for instance, that an abler man could have saved the estates of the Church in Spain, or have enabled Francis of Naples to keep his kingdom, when Cavour wished not to take it, or have made some quiet agreement with a politician so little moved by religious rancour as Prince Bismarck. As far as we can see, Cardinal Antonelli, with all his polish and his charm of manner and his supposed worldly wisdom, never acquired any influence of any sort over any dangerous person, not even over sovereigns who, like King Victor Emmanuel, sincerely believed in the spiritual danger of a conflict with the Papacy, or, like the Queen of Spain, was heartily and honestly devoted to the Church. As we read him he was a man of fine manners, much knowledge of per-

sons, great patience, and some ability in intrigue, who never quite understood the times in which he lived, or the comparative strength of forces in motion, or the real views of the statesmen whom he had to manage. He was obliged always to wait upon events, and therefore never controlled them. It is certain, to give concrete instances of his want of foresight, that he thought the Austrians would defeat the French in 1860, that he believed the French would defeat the Germans in 1870, and that he did not expect the final entry of the Italians into Rome. He was as habitually wrong in his political forecasts as Maria Theresa's adviser, Kaunitz, whom in many other respects he so greatly resembled. His failures to win may not have been his fault, for the forces against him were overwhelming, but his failure to foresee, with the immense machinery of Rome to help him in foreseeing, unquestionably throws doubt on his claim to be a statesman of any high order.

Cardinal Antonelli is regarded in England as having been an exceptionally bad man, but there is very little evidence that he was one. As Secretary of State in an absolute Monarchy, he was callous to the personal suffering of Revolutionists, Voltairians, and other enemies; but he was no more callous than Prince Gortschakoff, or M. Rouher, and was not in any degree blood-thirsty. He probably rather disliked killing people when imprisoning them would do, and certainly acted as if he did. A worldly wise man, of elegantly luxurious tastes, he was first minister of a Church which has become ascetic, and was naturally supposed to be a hypocrite; but there is no proof of that either. He probably thought about his Church much as Lord Eldon thought about his, and never questioned or examined its spiritual claims at all. There it was, and his business was to defend it; and he did defend it, as well as he knew how, hating its open enemies, for instance, with a most sincere heart. He did not take part in theological discussions. He avoided taking full orders. He never pretended to be devout or ascetic, or spiritually-minded, or anything else except devoted to the Holy See, and he was devoted. That he did not live up to

the precepts of his Church is likely enough, though Roman gossip is very malignant; but neither did Philip the Second, or many another most sincere believer. It is said he stole a fortune, and he clearly possessed one which he could not have inherited; but it is most probable that he only managed cleverly the great perquisites which, by immemorial custom, flowed into his hands, and was only to blame for want of disinterestedness, and not for peculation. If he would have taken bribes millions would, from time to time, have been poured into his lap. The nepotism of which he was accused was of no immoderate kind, and there is no more reason why a Cardinal should not promote his relations than why an English Bishop should not give livings to his sons-in-law. It is much better not to do it, but it is not a crime. The personality of the Cardinal for good and evil has, in fact, been exaggerated by English opinion, and it is very doubtful if his decease will leave any important blank in the Council which, whenever the Pope is not personally moved by religious, or, at all events, pietistic emotion, controls the Roman Church. It certainly will not suffer greatly, for Cardinal Antonelli, whatever his good qualities, wanted that even balance among them which is probably, in this world, the cause of good luck. He never succeeded in anything, not even in managing the master who promoted and trusted him, and the affairs of the Holy See will probably go on with less friction because Cardinal Antonelli is away. Nothing can be worse for a Church in difficulties than to be represented in external affairs by a man whom his enemies believe to be a marvel of wiliness and guile, except perhaps to be represented by a man who is so esteemed without any good reason other than his smooth immovability. Nothing fetters the Catholic Church in England and other Protestant countries like the belief in the underhandedness of its managers, and in Cardinal Antonelli's case the whole world thought of the Pope's Foreign Secretary as English bourgeoisie think of every Jesuit.

## THE PUBLIC BEWILDERMENT ABOUT THE HIGHER EDUCATION.

(*From "The Economist," 2nd December*, 1876.)

MR. FORSTER is a sagacious man, and we turned with even the more interest to his address at Aberdeen, on the ground that he had not had a University education. What a man who was in every respect able enough and cultivated enough to form a shrewd practical judgment, but who had not been a University or even a public school man himself might think of the class of University men as such, and of their advantages and disadvantages in the actual business of life, and particularly of the apparent result of University education in teaching them to guard against their own weakness, and to make the best of their strong points, was a subject on which we thought it possible Mr. Forster might have something very well worth hearing to say, and certainly a subject on which it would have been extremely interesting to have heard Mr. Forster's opinion. But if Mr. Forster will forgive us for saying so, we rather think his address showed that he was, for a man of his capacity, a little unduly afraid of forming an independent opinion of University men and of the results of their training. His address, though not wanting in shrewd remark, was on the whole too propitiatory to University studies, and deficient in free actual criticism on the value of those studies as elements of character. When the cultivated eye for understanding life is once acquired, as it has been by Mr. Forster, it matters comparatively little *how* it has been acquired, whether by the help of a University, or in spite of a University; or, as in Mr. Forster's case, simply without a University. But Mr. Forster pays perhaps the most remarkable tribute in his power to the practical importance of a University education at least

in England, by the over-modesty of his own tone in dealing with the subject. This shows that in England at least a University education does one thing—namely, emancipates men from any excessive appreciation of its importance, such as the ablest men who have not passed through it are inclined to attach to it. It would seem as if it took a University education to teach a man that, excellent as it is, it is not all that the outside world supposes, and may, under certain unfavourable conditions, be even rather mischievous than otherwise. Mr. Forster must have had plenty of experience at the Education Office of men to whom a University education had not given half as much true culture as he himself had extracted out of a busy life without a University education. And we only wish that the grand repute which generally attaches to the unknown, had not prevented Mr. Forster from giving us a straightforward estimate of what seemed to him the advantages and disadvantages of this kind of education, as we see it at work in England and Scotland; and also that, if he had formed any judgment on that head, he would have told us whether the English or Scotch system appears to him to have turned out the men most equal to the affairs of life. Not only, however, do we find no such actual criticism of the better and worse effects of University culture, as we cannot but think Mr. Forster might, if he had taken heart, have given us, but we find in his address a certain indefinitiveness of view as to what University education can, and ought to give, and the mode in which it should give it. In the earlier part of his address, he speaks of it as the ideal of a University to give the student "the information most useful to him, in such a manner as to enable him best to use it". Now if that were really the ideal of a University system, a University system would, we take it, for all but professional men, be wholly needless. We take it that for the purpose of success in a very great many departments of life, and those departments some of the most important to the well-being of the community, a very early apprenticeship to the work to be done gives a lad "the information most useful to him, in such a manner as to enable him best to use it". But then we

mean by the word "useful," "useful" in the narrow sense, useful for the purposes of what is ordinarily termed a successful career, useful for the making of a prosperous business and the keeping of a prosperous business. University culture, we take it, is desired, and in general rightly desired, for the sake of something beyond this—for the sake of giving a wider outlook into life, and a finer appreciation of its various elements, than any mastery of "the information most useful to a man, in such a manner as to enable him best to use it," would of itself imply. If University culture were not wanted for its own sake, there would be but little of it, we fancy, required for the purposes merely of securing to men the knowledge most useful to them, with the best means of applying it. In other parts of Mr. Forster's address, however, the largest possible appreciation of all kinds of culture is implied, not only for the purpose of the politician—with which he was chiefly dealing—but for their own sake. So that, on the whole, the bewilderment which, as we think, the English world in general shows in dealing with the vast subject of the higher education, Mr. Forster's address rather seems to us to reflect than to remove.

We sometimes think that the English genius, like the Roman genius, was in some respects better fitted to deal with the comparatively simpler problems of the earlier days of the Empire, than with those more complex conditions which crowd upon and distract the political minds which have to determine the course of the nation in the later days of democratic ascendancy and the elaborate division of intellectual labour. It seems pretty clear, we think, that this was true of Rome. In the time when her jurisprudence was comparatively simple, and rough justice, with military promptitude, courage, and discipline were the chief qualities which were needed for political pre-eminence, the Roman genius was far more than equal to all the demands upon it. But as soon as the questions connected with slavery, and the questions connected with popular rights, and the questions arising out of the annexation of great provinces, whose populations could not easily be dealt with by legislation proceeding from Rome, and which yet could

not easily be trusted with powers of self-government, and lastly, the questions springing from a rapidly growing complexity of legal distinctions,—came to harass and perplex the practical genius of Rome, the age of decay began, and the character which had been so great amidst the physical pressure of invasion or treason, betrayed how much less suited it was to battle with the hundreds of confusions and complexities which were now substituted for one great peril, or one great call for heroic self-denial. If English institutions should ever collapse, it is not perhaps a mere wild speculation to suppose that it may be beneath the artificial complexity of modern life, which certainly not infrequently seems to be extremely bewildering to Englishmen.

At least with regard to the higher education we seem to observe some beginning of such a failure. Half a century and less ago, we had at Oxford and Cambridge two very different systems of education, which, imperfect as they were, still succeeded admirably in securing for those who really submitted their minds to them a very thorough intellectual discipline, the one in Greek and Latin scholarship, and certain great historical and philosophical writers, the other in mathematical reasoning and mathematical methods of computation. A first-class man at Oxford really had gained an insight into the genius of the Greek and Latin language, and especially into some of the masterpieces of Greek and Latin literature; for instance, the history of Thucydides and Aristotle's Ethics. A high Cambridge wrangler might be assumed to be really familiar with the greatest efforts at geometrical reasoning, and the highest triumphs of those comparatively modern and most original devices for economising imaginative power which are contained in the methods of the differential and integral calculus. Then came a period when a host of other new sciences opened upon us. Comparative philology took far more elaborate forms, requiring a very wide field of linguistic knowledge; history took out a new lease of life, and established almost new principles of evidence; mathematical physics enlarged so rapidly that it took a man more time to cover its new developments in a single direction—like physical optics for example—

than it cost him to master the whole elementary mathematics and physics of the earlier period; a whole host of new sciences of a very different class emerged, physical geography and biology, in those intimate relations with one another which have been shown to subsist by Darwin and his *collaborateurs;* geology, with its various and striking developments into what is now called palæontology, or the inferences which may be drawn concerning states of life long passed away from the traces that still remain; and at the same time the scientific treatment of law and physiology took quite new developments. The English people saw distinctly, that with all these new branches of knowledge breaking upon us, it would never do to limit the higher education to the two old fields. But the variety and complexity of the new outlook bewildered them, and they failed to see that the essence of what was useful in the old system was its thoroughness, and that whatever should be altered, the plan of requiring the most thorough knowledge from those who wished to attain the same distinctions as of old, ought not to be altered. To our minds it seems clear that while a great many new alternatives of study should have been given—and this was the principle of the late Prince Consort's first proposed change at Cambridge—as thorough a mastery of these new studies should have been required for high honours as was required under the old *régime* in the Oxford final schools and the Cambridge mathematical schools. We believe that it is just this thoroughness—though it is in one narrow practical field, the limitation to which is too apt to narrow the mind—which a lad who is early apprenticed to the business to which he is to devote his life, gains; and that no University system which does not give him this thoroughness can really be otherwise than dangerous to him in later life. If he gets a habit of mistaking a smattering for a real knowledge of a subject, he more or less spoils his mind for practical life. We fear that our University authorities are forgetting this, and even substituting a very inferior discipline in a good number of subjects, for that thorough discipline in one or two, which, however limited it may seem, really teaches a man the limits of his own knowledge, and the extent of his own ignor-

ance far more clearly than a half-knowledge of many things can do. We had hoped that Mr. Forster, as a man of the world who has attained his culture without our Universities, and is therefore the better able to criticise their deficiencies, would have pointed this out; whereas the general drift of his address appears to us rather to *favour* the attempting many things, instead of mastering one or two. Yet it is as true of University studies as of any other department of life—that the jack-of-all-trades will be master of none.

## MR. LOWE ON THE OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY BILL.

(*From "The Economist," 24th February*, 1877.)

MR. LOWE, on one or two subjects, still retains his ancient Conservatism. On the subject of the franchise he is altogether Conservative, and on the subject of University policy he is, if very much of a reformer as regards the treatment of the degree-giving bodies, yet very much of a Tory as regards any proposal to touch the College endowments or to appropriate the revenues now devoted to fellowships to any object either of scholastic or of scientific research. Moreover, his exceeding Toryism in this respect makes him press an argument against the present Bill of the Government, which seems to us inapplicable and far-fetched. He points out that in preparing for the great reform measure of twenty-three years ago, the course taken was very different indeed from the course now adopted; that a very able Commission of Inquiry was first appointed which did its work exceedingly well, and that after it had reported, and its report had been well considered, the Government came forward with a measure in which it laid down all the main principles of legislation, and left only the details to be settled by the executive Commissions. The present course, as Mr. Lowe truly says, is a very different one. No Commission—except one of inquiring into the finances of the various colleges comprehended in the two elder Universities, and into the revenues of these Universities themselves—has recently been appointed. The Legislature is apparently quite ignorant of the present condition of the two Universities, and of their colleges. Parliament does not apparently know—probably does not know at all—what has recently been done in either University, still less what ought to be done. Ob-

viously no one is more ignorant on this head than Mr. Lowe himself. And yet in complete ignorance of this condition of things Parliament is to appoint a Commission, with discretion to make certain changes, of the value of which Parliament knows little, and of the sufficiency of which it knows less. Surely, says Mr. Lowe, this is not as it should be. Adequate inquiry should precede legislation, and the legislation when it takes place, should be legislation passed by the two Houses themselves, and not by a delegated body invested by Parliament with discretion to do as it pleases. The argument would be exceedingly strong but for one or two considerations, but these are considerations which seem to us entirely to destroy its applicability. The first is this, that the proposed measure is not one of a drastic or even of a potent character. It is one which can at best accomplish the few moderate reforms on which all thinking parties in the Universities are pretty well agreed. It is, in fact, a measure empowering the moderates of the two Universities to effect such reasonable improvements as may be calculated rather to stave off than to hasten more revolutionary measures.

Mr. Lowe's clients, the colleges, are especially well protected. They will each of them be able to defend themselves against anything like not merely confiscation, but nervous alarms, by the help of the three special Commissioners whom they are to place on the Commission, for the purpose of all statutes affecting the interest of that College. And besides this the character of the Commission itself is a guarantee against sensational measures. Neither the Oxford nor the Cambridge Commission contains a single reformer of extreme views, and each of them contains very many of well-known Conservatism. Indeed, if the Bill be worth anything, it is worth far more for the purpose of removing in good time admitted blots which, if allowed to continue, might lead to more thoroughgoing change, than for the purpose of any reform such as that carried out by the University Act of the last generation. In the next place, the discretion of Parliament is by no means so completely delegated to these Commissioners as Mr. Lowe's argument seems to require. Unfortunately, as

we think, in some cases,—fortunately perhaps in others,—there are stringent limitations on their discretion which reduces their power of anything like sensational innovation very nearly to zero. In some cases, the bodies which might be most seriously affected by these statutes have an absolute veto on them. In other cases there is an appeal to the Queen in Council, and if the Universities Committee of the Privy Council should disallow the statute after hearing such an appeal, the statute will have no effect. And, then, even if it is not vetoed or altered by this Committee of the Privy Council, it must be laid before both Houses of Parliament, and if either House dissents from it, it is to be of no effect. It is obvious, therefore, that the statutes of the Commissioners will have much more of an analogy to minutes of the Privy Council in relation to the regulations affecting primary education than to new principles of education, such as are supposed to require an Act to embody them in our Education law. Mr. Lowe would hardly ask that every modification of the Education code should be made by Act of Parliament, yet what he asks in relation to the Universities is very nearly of this nature.

As it seems to us, the true criticism on the Universities Bill is not that it does too much, but that it is but too likely to do too little—less even than might be expected from the Conservative Government which is now in power, and from the very moderate reforming spirit of which they boast. One very signal blot in the Bill was certainly hit by Mr. Goschen. He pointed out how very awkwardly the negotiation between the University Commission and the various colleges is likely to work. As regards, at least, the appropriation of surplus collegiate revenues to the purposes of the central body—the University in the narrower sense—what is really wanted is that the Commission should estimate the needs of the University, and then divide the burden amongst the colleges in proportion to their unused, or, it might be, in some cases, their misused, surplus wealth. But this is just the kind of procedure which the method of the Bill seems likely to exclude. The negotiation with each college must be carried on separately, through the collegiate delegation which for this

purpose is to be put on to the Commission, unless the college previously and spontaneously decides to do what the Commission thinks sufficient. The effect of that must be that the various colleges must all be dealt with on individual terms, and not with relation to the requirements of the scheme as a whole, and to the relative magnitude of the disposable surpluses of the particular colleges. Nor do we see how this great blot is to be got rid of without a radical alteration of the whole principle of the Bill.

With the criticisms passed by Dr. Playfair and Sir John Lubbock on the Bill we are certainly less disposed to agree. What Dr. Playfair requires is that men who are not identified with either of our great Universities should be placed on the Commission in order to represent the interests of the public outside the Universities, while Sir John Lubbock wishes to see more conspicuous representatives of the natural sciences placed on the Commission. Now, if the Commissioners were Commissioners of Inquiry into the general principles and deficiencies of the two Universities, we should agree with both proposals and think them most reasonable. The interests of the general public, and the interests of natural science ought assuredly to be represented on any large Commission of that nature. But it is a very different thing in relation to a small executive Commission, not even intended, and still less adapted, to initiate any great change of policy, but chosen virtually in order to give effect to such few proposals as the good sense of both parties in the Universities has at length sanctioned. You might do much mischief by introducing an element of discord and of alien opinions into small bodies adapted for such a purpose as this, while it would hardly be possible to do any good. This is an essentially modest and humble proposal, and cannot be criticised to any advantage from the point of view which would be appropriate to a more ambitious measure. The means should be adapted to the end. And no such change as the member for Edinburgh University and the member for Maidstone recommend would be adapted to the end contemplated in this probably useful but certainly very unpretending Bill.

## THE DECLARATION OF PARIS.

(*From "The Economist," 17th March*, 1877.)

THE recent debate in the House of Commons on Mr. Percy Wyndham's proposal, that the Government should put an end as soon as possible to our engagement to abide by the Declaration of Paris in regard to the usages of maritime war, demonstrates very satisfactorily that under neither a Liberal nor a Tory Government is there any substantial chance of our drawing back from that engagement. The truth is that it is a mere fallacy to say that it is in the interest of peace and commerce to make war as terrible, and as destructive to commerce, as it may be. That might possibly be the case if it were but true that whenever there was war at all, everybody was at war, and, further, that the sufferings of a great number of combatants would in any way tend to make the conclusion of peace an object of common desire. But neither of these propositions is true. In a world so complex as ours it would be of course simply absurd to assume that all nations could be implicated seriously in the quarrels of one or two. You might just as well assume that in a populous country like England, all the citizens would be seriously injured by every brawl and every murder. And just as in a well-governed country the aim of the police, and of all who have to keep order, is to prevent disorder from spreading,—to keep the mischief which disorder causes as isolated as may be,—so in Europe it should clearly be the object of those who look after the working of international rules and laws, to prevent as much as possible the mischiefs of war from spreading amongst those who are not implicated in the quarrel,—to keep the intercourse of the neutrals as free and safe as it is possible to keep it, and to cut off, as far as may be, the contagion of the ill-feelings which

war engenders from spreading to those who are at present at peace. This was the object of the Declaration of Paris,—to protect as much as possible the interests of neutrals in a time of war,—to eliminate causes of sore feeling which, while of no primary importance to the prosecution of the war, are very likely to widen the area of the struggle,—in a word, so to insulate the acts of violence as to render it much less likely than it otherwise would be, that neutral nations, from the wanton injury done to their interests while they stay out of the war, should be induced to take an active part. And unquestionably this is the true policy. For no wilder dream than the notion that, the greater the number of sufferers, the stronger will be the tendency towards peace, was ever conceived. All experience shows that it is the wars in which a great many different States are concerned which are the most difficult to bring to a conclusion. If England or France had participated in the American Civil War, it is all but impossible that it could have closed when it did. If Russia or Austria had intervened in the short, though bloody war of 1870, the chances are that peace might not have been concluded even now. If France had struck in between Prussia and Austria in 1866, the war would certainly not have lasted only seven weeks. The more complicated the grievances and bitternesses, the more difficult they are to heal. There never was a worse blunder than the supposition that the more States there are to suffer by a sanguinary quarrel, the sooner will the motives prevail for bringing it to a conclusion. Let the belligerents spare the neutrals in every possible way, if they do not want to be fighting for ever. It is in the interests of those who remain at peace that the principles regulating the natural limitations of war should be considered and decided on ; not in the interests of those who are eager to inflict the most injury they can, in the shortest time, on their antagonist. That, no doubt, is the real object of war ; but, then, who will deny that even when at war a nation has, and ought to have, a great many other even more important objects than the object of striking a crushing blow at his enemy? It is usually much more important even for a belligerent nation not to cut itself

off from its fellowship with other nations than even to make its antagonist succumb. And if it were not so, it is certainly much more important for the nations which remain at peace to be allowed to profit to the full by that peace, than it is for those who are at war to inflict the greatest possible damage, in the shortest possible time, on those with whom they are at war. It may not be always easy to reconcile the immediate interest of a belligerent with the best interests of the neutrals. But when that is impossible, the best interests of the neutrals ought to prevail. And even if it were true, instead of false, that the worse the injury war inflicts, the sooner it is likely to come to an end, even in that case, a war of somewhat longer duration, which does not ruin neutrals as well as belligerents, would be a less evil to the world than a war of shorter duration which had inflicted on pacific peoples almost as much suffering as on those which were at strife.

It was from considerations of this kind that the rules agreed upon at Paris, to the effect that privateers are to be given up, that a blockade to be binding must be in some sense effective, that neutral bottoms cover enemies' goods, and that neutral goods are to be respected even in enemies' bottoms, were agreed upon. And the debate and division to which Mr. Percy Wyndham's abortive resolution gave rise, proves unanswerably that, notwithstanding some unfortunate opinions dropped by some of the Conservative leaders when in Opposition, it would be quite impossible to detach England from the adhesion she gave to these wholesome rules, tending as they do to moderate the exasperation caused by war—or, at least, to guard against that class of exasperations which are likely to drag others into the contest. A majority of 114 (170 against 56), obtained under a Government most of whose leading members had formerly committed themselves against the Declaration of Paris, puts the seal on those international rules, and should defeat entirely the hopes of those who, like Mr. Percy Wyndham and Lord Esslington, endeavoured to persuade us to retire from our agreement.

Nor do we doubt, as we have in former years often argued, that the immunities conceded by the Declaration of Paris to

neutral goods and ships, might well be extended to all private property at sea, without in any way crippling seriously the resources of maritime war, and with the greatest possible advantage to the world. No doubt that carries a reasonable restriction a little further. Yet as far as we can see, it does not in the least diminish the advantages of a great naval power in a maritime war, while such a rule would—if honestly observed—prevent a very great and very superfluous disturbance of trade. As our present rules stand, the only additional effect of respecting all private property at sea would be this,—that the commercial marine of a maritime power need not be transferred at once in time of war to some neutral power or powers, so that the carrying, which it previously did under its own flag, would be now done under some other flag. That is the present effect of our rules, and a very useless and mischievous effect it is. No naval power which happens to be at war can rely so implicitly of course on naval escorts for all its commercial marine as to make it possible that its carrying trade should go on undiminished. The real effect, therefore, of a declaration of war is to impose a heavy fine on the shipowners of the powers thus engaged in maritime war, all the shipowners on both sides being compelled, of course, to transfer their ships to the shipowners of neutral nations at what must be in all probability, a very heavy loss. That is a bonus to the shipowners of the neutral powers, and a heavy fine on a particular class in the nations which go to war, but it has no tendency of any importance to diminish the naval resources of the powers at war, and certainly none to increase them. Of course if the commercial ships of the enemy continued to put to sea under the old flag, that would be a great opportunity to his antagonist for striking a blow at his commerce. But shipowners are not so silly as all that. They will transfer the ships they cannot use to some neutral shipowner, who will of course be likely to have an increase of demand for his ships exactly equal to the gap caused in the carrying trade by the withdrawal of the belligerent's ships from that trade. Hence, while the effect of leaving it legitimate to capture the private ships of your enemy, is not at all to diminish the general re-

sources at that enemy's command, it is to disarrange seriously the machinery of the carrying trade for no good purpose. Nevertheless, we must freely admit that there is a difficulty about affirming the immunity from capture of all private property at sea,—except contraband of war destined for either belligerent—and it is simply this, that there is no one to complain to any purpose if the agreement is not respected. We may of course, if we please, agree to respect the private property of our enemies when at sea, but if we don't keep our word, who is to call us to account for it? Not our enemy, for he is already doing all in his power to call us to account; and clearly not any neutral power which has not been aggrieved, and would not wish to run the risk of a quarrel for the sake of enforcing abstract justice. Thus, reasonable as the development of the rules about maritime war, agreed on in 1856 at Paris, into a fresh rule securing the immunity of all private property at sea certainly is, we must admit at once that we do not see by whom, if it is broken, it is to be enforced. It must be a purely voluntary engagement, binding, of course, in honour on all who give it, but if disregarded, not disregarded at the cost of making a new enemy by that disregard. No doubt the observance of most international rules of this kind is more or less spontaneous. The organisation of the police of Europe does not yet admit of enforcing any of them. But still the rest of them are morally enforced to some extent by remembering that if we disregard them we shall make a host of enemies among the neutral powers, as well as be conscious of our own dishonour. But *this* rule would be one of honour alone. And we cannot say that we regard this motive as one sufficient to secure its due observance by the maritime States of Europe, or that we see much chance of any other and stronger motive. Still, we seriously believe that if all the maritime powers both knew their own interests, and were adequate guardians of their own honour, they would spontaneously engage to respect all private property at sea, and to restrict their navies to the blockades of the coasts and ports of the enemy, to the sealing up of navies of inferior power in those ports, and to the attack and capture of the enemy's

fleets. That is all that can really be done by any navy now to disable an enemy, unless we decline to weigh the enormous disadvantage of making enemies of numbers of neutrals, against the temporary advantage of inflicting a little more suffering on the enemy.

The above was the last article which Walter Bagehot wrote in the *Economist*, the week before he died. In the same number appeared the announcement that the new Act respecting *Treasury Bills* had received the Royal assent.

## TENDERS FOR TREASURY BILLS.

(*From "The Economist," 17th March*, 1877.)

WE understand that the following is to be the first advertisement for Treasury bills under the new Act, which received the Royal assent last night:—

"1. The Lords Commissioners of her Majesty's Treasury hereby give notice that tenders will be received at the chief cashier's office of the Bank of England, on Friday, the 23rd inst., at one o'clock, for Treasury bills, to be issued under the Act 40 Vic., cap. 2, to the amount of two millions two hundred thousand pounds (£2,200,000).

"2. The bills will be in amounts of £1,000, £5,000, or £10,000. They will be dated 28th March inst., and will be payable at three or six months after date (at the option of the persons tendering).

"3. *The tenders must specify the net amount per cent. which will be given for the amounts applied for.*

"4. The bills will be issued and paid at the Bank of England.

"5. The persons whose tenders are accepted will be informed of the same on Saturday, the 24th inst., and payment in full of the amounts of the accepted tenders must be made to the Bank of England, on Wednesday, the 28th inst.

"Treasury Chambers, Whitehall, 15th March, 1877."

The bills, it will be observed, are made as like bankers' or mercantile bills as possible. The difference in the tenders is to be practically made in the rate of discount, and the discount will be deducted from the sum advanced to the Government just as it is in the ordinary discount of a mercantile bill. The sum now asked is £2,200,000.

*Note.*—In Vol. X., page 22, will be found Lord Welby's account of how Walter Bagehot invented these Treasury bills. "They have not only met ordinary emergency demands," writes Lord Welby, "but they have stood the strain of a great war." It may be added that at the present time, September, 1914, while the war is raging between England, her Allies and Germany, Bagehot's invention is still apparently adequate to meet the great strain of this war.

## DULL GOVERNMENT.

(*From "The Saturday Review," 16th February*, 1856.)

PARLIAMENT is a great thing, but it is not a cheerful thing. Just reflect on the existence of "Mr. Speaker". First, a small man speaks to him—then a shrill man speaks to him—then a man who cannot speak *will* speak to him. He leads a life of "passing tolls," joint-stock companies, and members out of order. Life is short, but the forms of the House are long. Mr. Ewart complains that a multitude of members, including the Prime Minister himself, actually go to sleep. The very morning paper feels the weight of this leaden *régime*. Even in the dullest society you hear complaints of the dulness of Parliament—of the representative tedium of the nation.

That an Englishman should grumble is quite right, but that he should grumble at gravity is hardly right. He is rarely a lively being himself, and he should have a sympathy with those of his kind. And he should further be reminded that his criticism is out of place—that dulness in matters of Government is a good sign, and not a bad one—that, in particular, dulness in Parliamentary Government is a test of its excellence, an indication of its success. The truth is, all the best business is a little dull. If you go into a merchant's counting-house, you see steel pens, vouchers, files, books of depressing magnitude, desks of awful elevation, staid spiders and sober clerks moving among the implements of tedium. No doubt, to the parties engaged, much of this is very attractive. "What," it has been well said, "are technicalities to those without, are realities to those within." To every line in those volumes, to every paper on those damp files, there has gone doubt, decision, action—the work of a considerate brain, the

touch of a patient hand, yet even to those engaged, it is commonly the least interesting business which is the best. The more the doubt, the greater the liability to error—the longer the consideration, generally the worse the result—the more the pain of decision, the greater the likelihood of failure. In Westminster Hall, they have a legend of a litigant who stopped his case because the lawyers said it was "interesting". "Ah," he remarked afterwards, "they were going up to the 'Lords' with it, and I should never have seen my money." To parties concerned in law, the best case is a plain case. To parties concerned in trade, the best transaction is a plain transaction—the sure result of familiar knowledge; in political matters, the best sign that things are going well is that there should be nothing difficult—nothing requiring deep contention of mind—no anxious doubt, no sharp resolution, no lofty and patriotic execution. The opportunity for these qualities is the danger of the commonwealth. You cannot have a Chatham in time of peace—you cannot storm a Redan in Somersetshire. There is no room for glorious daring in periods of placid happiness.

And if this be the usual rule, certainly there is nothing in the nature of Parliamentary Government to exempt it from its operation. If business is dull, business wrangling is no better. It is dull for an absolute Minister to have to decide on passing tolls, but it is still duller to hear a debate on them—to have to listen to the two extremes and the *via media*. One honourable member considers that the existing ninepence ought to be maintained; another thinks it ought to be abolished; and a third—the independent thinker—has statistics of his own, and suggests that fourpence-halfpenny would "attain the maximum of revenue with the minimum of inconvenience"—only he could wish there were a decimal coinage to "facilitate the calculations of practical pilots". Of course, this is not the highest specimen of Parliamentary speaking. Doubtless, on great questions, when the public mind is divided, when the national spirit is roused, when powerful interests are opposed, when large principles are working their way, when deep difficulties press for a decision, there is an opportunity for noble

eloquence. But these very circumstances are the signs, perhaps, of calamity; certainly of political difficulty and national doubt. The national spirit is not roused in happy times—powerful interests are not divided in years of peace—the path of great principles is marked through history by trouble, anxiety, and conflict. An orator requires a topic. "Thoughts that breathe and words that burn" will not suit the "Liability of Joint-Stock Companies"—you cannot shed tears over a "toll". Where can there be a better proof of national welfare than that Disraeli cannot be sarcastic, and that Lord Derby fails in a diatribe? Happy is the country which is at peace within its borders—yet stupid is the country when the Opposition is without a cry.

Moreover, when Parliamentary business is a bore, it is a bore which cannot be overlooked. There is much torpor secreted in the *bureaux* of an absolute Government, but no one hears of it—no one knows of its existence. In England it is different. With pains and labour—by the efforts of attorneys—by the votes of freeholders—you collect more than six hundred gentlemen; and the question is, what are they to do? As they come together at a specific time, it would seem that they do so for a specific purpose—but what it is they do not know. It is the business of the Prime Minister to discover it for them. It is extremely hard on an effervescent First Lord to have to set people down to mere business—to bore them with slow reforms—to explain details they cannot care for—to abolish abuses they never heard of—to consume the hours of the night among the perplexing details of an official morning. But such is the Constitution. The Parliament is assembled—some work must be found for it—and this is all that there is. The details which an autocratic Government most studiously conceals are exposed in open day—the national sums are done in public—finance is made the most of. If the war had not intervened, who knows that by this time Parliament would not be commonly considered "The Debating Board of Trade"? Intelligent foreigners can hardly be brought to understand this. It puzzles them to imagine how any good or smooth result can be educed from so much

jangling, talking, and arguing. M. de Montalembert has described amazement as among his predominant sensations in England. He felt, he says, as if he were in a manufactory—where wheels rolled, and hammers sounded, and engines crunched—but from which, nevertheless, by a miracle of industrial art, some beautiful fabric issued, soft, complete, and perfect. Perhaps this simile is too flattering to the neatness of our legislation, but it happily expresses the depressing noise and tedious din by which its results are really arrived at.

As are the occupations, so are the men. Different kinds of government cause endless variety in the qualities of statesmen. Not a little of the interest of political history consists in the singular degree in which it shows the mutability and flexibility of human nature. After various changes, we are now arrived at the business statesman—or rather the business speaker. The details which have to be alluded to, the tedious reforms which have to be effected, the long figures which have to be explained, the slow arguments which require a reply—the heaviness of subjects, in a word—have caused a corresponding weight in our oratory. Our great speeches are speeches of exposition—our eloquence is an eloquence of detail. No one can read or hear the speeches of our ablest and most enlightened statesmen without being struck with the contrast which they exhibit—we do not say to the orations of antiquity (which were delivered under circumstances too different to allow of a comparison), but to the great Parliamentary displays of the last age—of Pitt, or Fox, or Canning. Differing from each other as the latter do in most of their characteristics, they all fall exactly within Sir James Macintosh's definition of Parliamentary oratory—"animated and continuous after-dinner conversation". They all have a gentlemanly effervescence and lively agreeability. They are suitable to times when the questions discussed were few, simple, and large—when detail was not—when the first requisite was a pleasant statement of obvious considerations. We are troubled—at least our orators are troubled—with more complex and difficult topics. The patient exposition, the elaborate minuteness, the exhaustive disquisition, of modern Parliamentary eloquence

would formerly have been out of place—they are now necessary on complicated subjects, which require the exercise of a laborious intellect, and a discriminating understanding. We have not gained in liveliness by the change, and those who remember the great speakers of the last age are the loudest in complaining of our tedium. The old style still lingers on the lips of Lord Palmerston; but it is daily yielding to a more earnest and practical, to a sober *before*-dinner style.

It is of no light importance that these considerations should be recognised, and their value carefully weighed. It has been the bane of many countries which have tried to obtain freedom, but failed in the attempt, that they have regarded popular Government rather as a means of intellectual excitement than as an implement of political work. The preliminary discussion was more interesting than the consequent action. They found it pleasanter to refine arguments than to effect results—more glorious to expand the mind with general ratiocination than to contract it to actual business. They wished, in a word, to have a popular Government without, at the same time, having a dull Government. The English people have never forgotten what some nations have scarcely ever remembered—that politics are a kind of business—that they bear the characteristics, and obey the laws, inevitably incident to that kind of human action. Steady labour and dull material—wrinkles on the forehead and figures on the tongue—these are the English admiration. We may prize more splendid qualities on uncommon occasions, but these are for daily wear. You cannot have an *æra per annum;* if every year had something memorable for posterity, how would posterity ever remember it? Dulness is our line, as cleverness is that of the French. Woe to the English people if they ever forget that. All through their history, heavy topics and tedious talents have awakened the admiration and engrossed the time of their Parliament and their country.

## AVERAGE GOVERNMENT.

(*From "The Saturday Review," 29th March*, 1856.)

MANY persons are for ever demanding a great statesman. They should be asked, however, what they want him for? People should consider the use of people. It may be well to think what manner of man a commanding statesman really is. The description of such a personage divides itself into two parts—his disposition and his intellect. What the disposition of a first-rate practical man naturally is, the reading world has just had unusual opportunities of learning. Both ancient and modern times have contributed to its illustration. Mr. Grote has given us a description of Alexander the Great; and Napoleon, in his letters to his brother, has left the picture of himself. Different as were the circumstances and intellect of the two heroes, one might fancy that, in both cases, it was the same overbearing character. "What is the world that it should strive to contend against *me?*" was the motto of both—in both we see the naturalness of the alliance between imperial talents and an imperious mind. Men who can govern wish to govern—men who can rule will rule. A sense of power animates the powerful. Those who have passed their lives in overcoming enormous obstacles, to whom "difficulty is a helper," and whom no adversary can rival—cannot avoid feeling their strength. It is proved to them by the whole experience of their lives. An intense self-reliance is natural to men who can prove an overbearing ability by tangible results—who are successful in verifiable action.

It may further be asked, what we can do with the imperial disposition in this country? There are persons who are quite aware. By one of those curious fatalities which give an interest to intellectual history, the University of Oxford has

for some years been fertile in novelty and paradox. Such are the designs of men. The English people wished a centre of tradition for their ancestral belief—they built quiet cloisters, they devised dull tutors, they endowed mouldering colleges. They wanted a place where nothing new would ever be discovered, and where only what was old would thrive. The result is a reaction against the past—a marked opposition to English ideas. It is not within our province to speak of the theological speculations of the past twenty years; but it is very material to our present purpose to point out that the last exposed heresy is a hatred of the English constitution. The aged Politics of Aristotle have been introduced into the discussion. A Mr. Congreve has published an edition of them in which he tells us plainly that our constitutional system is "effete"—that "our governing classes are incompetent"—that our hope is a despotism popular with the lower classes, or, as he phrases it, "a monocratic dictatorial power supported by the adhesion of the Proletariat". The accomplished gentleman is possessed with the idea; and in another work in some lectures at Edinburgh, he bursts forth in the midst of the most arid history, with an aspiration for the rule of the great Protector. We do not know if any gentleman from the banks of the Isis contemplates commencing the career of a Cromwell, but surely, if not, the obvious plan is to apply to Napoleon the Third. He is a shrewd man—he has the talents for empire—and doubtless he would *contract* to govern England. His taste is lavish, and he might be a little dear; but what is gold to mind? *He* would not reign without governing; and under his vigorous rule, admirable lecturers might, perhaps, be delicately compressed.

But passing from these original speculations, what place is there just now for the dictatorial disposition under the English Constitution? Surely it would be difficult to find. The English idea is a committee—we are born with a belief in a green cloth, clean pens, and twelve men with grey hair. In topics of belief the ultimate standard is a jury. "A jury," as a living judge once said, "would decide this, but how they would decide it, I cannot think." As a jury will discover

everything, a board will determine anything. "We speak," observed Lord Brougham, "of the *wisdom* of Parliament." The whole fabric of English society is based upon discussion —all our affairs are decided, after the giving of reasons, by the compromise of opinions. What has the over-weening dictator to do here? He is too clever to give reasons, too proud to compromise his judgment. He is himself alone. A dictator will not save us—we require discussion, explanation, controversy. Of course, at particular crises, all this must be abandoned. At perilous epochs, we need practically uncontrolled power; and even an irritable distrust is best allayed by a fresh confidence in a firm and lofty mind. If, on the 1st of February last year, there had been a Chatham in the country, Chatham would have been Prime Minister; but he would not have been so long. We get tired of being commanded. Long before January, 1857, he would have become an "impracticable man"—an opposition orator.

The intellect of the enormous statesman is just as unfit for our circumstances as his disposition. His characteristic is far-seeing originality. In the recesses of his closet, by the mere force of his own understanding, he evolves a set of measures and a course of policy, years before his age, such as the people about him cannot comprehend, such as only posterity will really appreciate. Of what use is this in the House of Commons? That assembly is alive; and though posterity is going to be born, in the meantime there are the contemporaries of the great statesman, sitting in tedium, discussing the affairs of the nation. The condition of a free Government is that you must persuade the present generation; and the *gouvernement des avocats*, as the Emperor Nicholas called it, has this for principle—that you must persuade the average man. You do not address the select intellects of the age, or the more experienced intellect of the next age—but the actual rural individual—the dreary ordinary being. "It is all very well," said an able Whig, "for *The Times* to talk of the intelligence of public opinion—that only means that the public buy *The Times;* public opinion, Sir, is the opinion of the bald-headed man at the end of the omni-

bus." "Do not tell me of Mr. Pitt," said a surviving Tory—"Mr. Pitt would have found it a very different thing in these days. Mr. Pitt, Sir, would have had to persuade Joseph Hume." In truth, one of the dispensations of nature is the opacity of the average man. Nature has provided against the restlessness of genius by the obstinacy of stupidity. The man of genius is an age or two in advance. By incessant industry, subtle arguments, or a penetrating eloquence, he impresses his new ideas,—first, on the highest minds—next, on the next highest—and it is only after his death that they descend to the inferior *strata*, and become the property of the world. This exactly disqualifies him from agreeing with those about him, from forming a party on a basis of common sympathy, from carrying out what the people wish—from administering, as a statesman must, the creed of his time.

These reflections are a peculiarity of English history. We have always been governed by what Mr. Disraeli has termed "Arch-Mediocrities". From the days of Lord Burleigh down to those of Lord Liverpool, we have been governed, for the longest periods and with the greatest ease, by men who were essentially common men—men who never said anything which anyone in an omnibus could not understand—men who were never visited by the far-reaching thoughts or exciting aspirations of ardent genius, but who possessed the usual faculties of mankind in an unusual degree—men who were clear upon common points, who knew what people were just going to know, and who could embody in a Bill exactly what the commonalty thought should be embodied in a Bill. Of course, there may be, now and then, exceptions; for in this complicated world, unlimited principles abound in error. A great man who for years has advocated a great truth may at times be at last rewarded by carrying it out; and the punishment of calamity may teach the multitude what, a short time before, it required a great sagacity to foresee. But these events are, in their nature, exceptions. Regular business forms the regular statesman—quiet habits, sober thoughts, common aims are his obvious characteristics. He is what other men would wish to be. "Be *as* other men,"

is the precept, "and you will be above other men—be *ordinary*, and you will be great."

Certainly there is nothing at the present moment which emancipates us from the habitual condition of free Government. There are no special questions just now which call for the intervention of a man of genius. Our current domestic questions are a heap of specialities—"Passing tolls," "Registration of Companies," "County Constabulary," "Chancery Reform"—these are the occupations of our life. Fancy Lord Chatham discussing a toll-bill. What a gulf from Bonaparte to a policeman—from Alexander to a Master in Chancery! The details of the interior, "the streets and fountains which we are repairing, and the battlements which we are whitening"—to borrow from the historian of Greece the phrase of the Olynthiacs—cannot afford scope either for the excitable temperament or for the deep discernment of original genius.

In foreign politics, it is different, and yet the same. We are pretty well agreed about principles—the difficulties of fact. We know that we ought to rejoice at freedom, that we should show sympathy with it where it is likely to be stable, and that we should not allow it, even when unstable, to be trodden out by neighbouring despots; but, as the one-armed Captain remarked, "The bearings of them observations lies in the application on 'em". We wish to know in what particular States is real freedom—where it is likely to be stable—what risk this republic runs from that despot; and these matters of fact are scarcely fit for the man of genius, as we abstractedly conceive him. At least, if we want a genius in foreign policy, it is a genius of investigation—if in domestic, it is a genius of detail.

## THINKING GOVERNMENT.

(*From "The Saturday Review," 19th April*, 1856.)

WHAT mankind really wish to economise is thought. Admirable speculators publish beautiful eulogiums on the employment of the faculties, and the universal creed is, that the exertion of the reason is the highest and truest of human enjoyments; yet if a steady observer really looks at actual life, he will see that men never think if they can help it—that they require to be goaded towards it—that they invent devices to avoid it—that, however greedy of enjoyment in other ways, they decline, if possible, to enjoy themselves in this.

One of these devices is activity. People rush to and fro. They are never still. They go to eight committees in a day, taking care to be pretty late at each—they look at their watches the moment they get there—they spurt out rapid errors. If you suggest a little reflection before doing anything, they say, "Don't bother about that *now*"; and when all has gone wrong, they have the ready plea, "I was so occupied, I could not give *it* a thought". In their own circles, such men are always considered wonderful men of business. It is natural their wives and families should believe in them; for they spend so much toil and trouble, they make everybody so uncomfortable, in order to boil a pea, that those who know no better of course suppose that the pea is boiled. Nevertheless it is not—this impetuous activity is content with the boiling apparatus, and does not regard the useful result. It is among our middle classes, who are often held up as the sole models of men of action, that this kind of error is most rife. Place an active uneducated man in miscellaneous affairs, and it is nearly certain that he will commit this mistake. He will begin to *do* something—he will state that he is a "practical man"—it will

never strike him that there is an essential preliminary to wise exertion. His mind has not been trained to observe the varied relations of complicated phenomena, or to unravel the knotty thread of tangled topics; and so he will be apt to work ten hours a day at what it is scarcely necessary to do at all. He will leave undone the one little, essential, difficult matter —the one point of judgment—on which alone it was necessary to act or to decide. We do not say that the middle classes manage their own affairs on this principle, though there is a great deal more of it, even in them, than a charitable philosopher would be ready to suspect. Still they have habit, and bringing up, and arithmetic to control them. The ledger guides the mind—the sense of responsibility, of actual definite money-loss, represses undue activity, and compels men to a certain discretion. But if such persons—and they are exactly those whom a Government, if compelled to select, would, from their conspicuousness, choose as the representative men of the middle classes—were placed among great national affairs, and not paid a percentage on those affairs, but an inevitable salary from the indestructible taxation, they would act as *very* busy Members of Parliament now act. They would run quickly from committee to committee, and make a tour of great questions.

In our administrative departments, happily, this state of things does not prevail. A certain aristocratic *laissez aller* rather pervades them. In a public office, it would be indecorous to rush like a mighty wind. Yet it would be a great error to imagine that, in so large a department of human life, no expedient to economise thought and to dispense, *pro tanto*, with the pain of reflection, had been discovered and adopted. That resource is what is called business habits. There is such a thing as the pomp of order. In every public office there is a grave official personage who is always neat, whose papers are always filed, whose handwriting is always regular, who is considered a monster of experience, who can minute any proceeding, and docket any document. There is no finer or more saving investment of exertion than the formation of such habits. Under their safeguard, you

may omit anything, and commit every blunder. The English people never expect any one to be original. If it can be said, "The gentleman whose conduct is so harshly impugned is a man of long experience, who is not wont to act hastily—who is remarkable for official precision—in whom many Secretaries of State have placed much reliance," that will do; and it will not be too anxiously inquired what such a man has done. The immense probability is that he has done nothing. He is well aware that, so long as he can say anything is "under consideration," he is safe—and so long as he is safe, he is happy. His education, too, has not fitted him for much exertion. He entered the office young—he copied letters for five years—he made an index of papers for nine months—he made analyses of documents for five years more. When he commenced at last to transact business, it was of a strictly formal character; and he was upwards of twenty years in the public service before he ever decided on anything of essential importance. No wonder that he was unwilling to decide anything—that he refers everything—that he corresponds in his best handwriting with another public office—that when you want him you find him entering a minute, "That after mature deliberation, my Lords have postponed the consideration of what has taken place". In actual life, it is really very difficult not to over-estimate the usefulness of such a man. His appearance is so regular—his habits so precise—he has such a command of the instruments of utility—that it is difficult to imagine he does nothing. Only after considerable observation can it be learnt that it is this very command over the forms of action which enables him safely to neglect its essence—that it is his very familiarity with the rules of experience that enables him to apply them mechanically to instances to which they have only an outward reference and no real applicability. It is odd how some of the most gifted of our Administrative Reformers mistake the true point. The honourable member for Tynemouth, for example, who is a man of business, brought a great charge against the Admiralty that they did not keep the accounts duly and precisely. Of course Sir James Graham had no difficulty in showing that

the figures were excellently summed, that the ledger was for ever posted, that all the entries were made most legibly and with extreme care. The more plausible charge would have been precisely the contrary ; for it is the tendency of official men to regard what goes on within the office as always more important than what takes place without it. The more probable assumption would have been, that the entries were most correct, but that the transactions were wrong—that the book-keeping was admirable, but the affairs recorded feeble and insufficient. Arithmetic is indeed one of the established devices of the pseudo-official mind. When he is much pressed, he commonly adds up something. The mechanical nature of the operation rather suits him—he does it quite right—and his notion of figures rather resembles that of a celebrated actuary, whose wife observed, " Isn't it very odd that the Government could send out things three thousand miles, and *that* Fielder could not get them up six," and who replied, " My dear, how you talk, consider the figures, it was only an error of one-fifth per cent ". Very many sums are commonly done, and publicly quoted, which have no more real relation to the subject-matter than that of this gifted gentleman.

Our constitution presents us with yet another contrast to that simple and patient reflection which would naturally seem to be the habit of mind fitted for the judicious conduct of political affairs. All politicians are required to have all opinions. A voting acquaintance with all topics is required from every member of Parliament. From those in high places much more is exacted—they are required to have a ready, producible, defensible view of all great questions. Mr. Macaulay, who has been placed in a position to observe, tells us that, in his judgment, the effects of this are the most serious set-off to the advantages of free government. The habit of debating, and the necessity of making a speech, compel the finest intellects in the country to put forward daily arguments such as no man of sense would think of putting into a scientific treatise. He might have gone further, and said that the habit of always advancing a view commonly destroys the capacity for holding a view. The laxity of principle imputed

to old politicians is, by the time they are old, as much intellectual as moral. They have argued on all sides of everything, till they can believe on no side of anything. A characteristic of the same sort has been observed in journalism. One of our most celebrated contemporaries was asked his opinion on ten great subjects in succession, and on its appearing that he had no opinion, he said, apologetically, "You see, Ma'am, I have written for *The Times*".

We are well aware that something of this kind is inevitable. We do not expect from a professional politician the elaborate consideration of a closet philosopher—their ends are different, and their responsibilities are different. We do not wish to abolish official form, and to abandon the most delicate of practical matters to the sudden rush of the uncultivated mind. We admit—if need were, we would maintain—that there are many settled habits—that there is a certain exterior show and seeming—the possession of which is, in this world, a necessary preliminary to important employment. People will not trust you to act well unless you seem to be a person who would act well. Nor do we forget that business is an affair of body as well as of mind. In our objection to a precipitate and unthinking strength, we have no desire to reduce the public service to a sole dependence on feeble thought—on pale and inexecutive ability. We would only stipulate that, previously to all action, in the midst of the correct forms, and without respect to the exigencies of debate, our public men should find room for some painful thought—should give themselves at least a reasonable time for patient and anxious reflection.

## INTELLECTUAL CONSERVATISM.

(*From "The Saturday Review," 26th April*, 1856.)

AT first sight it does not seem difficult to be a Conservative. The *status quo* is a plain creed—you have to discover nothing, and to invent nothing. Very heavy men have been able to say, *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari.* Yet when the matter is more carefully looked at, we may see reason to change our opinion. Father Newman used to teach at Oxford that true opinions might become false because of the *manner* of holding them. He viewed—or seemed to view—truth as a succession of perpetual oscillations, like the negative and positive signs of an alternate series, in which you were constantly more or less denying or affirming the same proposition; and he deemed it certain that a person who unthinkingly rested at the beginning of the series, although he affirmed the truth, might really be farther from it than the thoughtful inquirer, some steps on, who actually denied it. The realisation—such was the creed in those days—which you gained in the process of inquiry, and which was on the point of bringing you to more effectual belief, was more than a compensation for the error of the momentary denial. And, whatever may be the inference from these severe metaphysics as to the mind of the inquirer himself, there is no doubt that, as to those around him, and among whom he desires to diffuse his belief, his power of so doing is directly proportioned to his realisation of what he holds, to his insight into its features and principles —to his mastery of it. The very plainness of the Conservative creed is here a difficulty. People in the country fancy they understand it. A rural dinner-party is rarely remarkable for adventurous conversation, but a good opinion-extractor will

not have the least difficulty in eliciting from the average inhabitant—squire or rector—an admission that he knows why what is, ought to be; and if you try to show an oddness in anything, the sentiment of society will be against you.

If we look at the political party, the traces of the fact are evident. We do not speak of the leaders. The final cause of Mr. Disraeli is the "great Asian mystery" that is not yet revealed—his partiality for the Caucasian and ancient races has drawn him back to "the times before morality". When a man is infinitely above having an opinion, it would be illogical to inquire how he holds that opinion. But take the average follower of this great man—any member of the plain and simple party which resisted Catholic Emancipation, which clove to Protection, which hates Maynooth, which could not understand Sir Robert Peel—of how few can even the most partial friend maintain that they really know what they are holding—that they have sounded the complicated depths of English society—that they understand the traditional maxims which they repeat—that they appreciate and comprehend the nice adjustment of the institutions which they would risk their lives to uphold. Their plain intellect seems unequal, their simple temperament seems opposed, to so elaborate an investigation. Does not the very fact of their being led by Mr. Disraeli at once evince that they do not themselves possess that full mastery of principles which is necessary for their argumentative exposition—that they scarcely appreciate the moral thoughtfulness which accompanies careful and rational conviction?

Looking back to the past fortunes and history of this great party, we observe two great sentiments or feelings which have in great part—sometimes worthily, and sometimes unworthily—supplied the place of intellectual conviction. The first is the old cavalier feeling of loyalty—the belief that all existence is a *regium donum*—that the very fact of doubt or inquiry is a misdeed—that the first duty of life is to accept that which is given, because of the king from whom it comes. Traces, few and faint, of this feeling may still be discerned among us, especially among those to whom a happy organisation gives a

daily enjoyment. In old customs and ancient associations it would not be difficult to show the vestiges of this curious and often noble feeling. It can, however, at least in that form, be only looked on as a great thing of the past. When once the change in politics is made from the one heaven-appointed monarch to a divided, shifting, constitutional system, the romance of royalty passes away—we are governed by a cabinet, and who ever found sentiment for a managing Committee?

Another feeling of a different kind is that which animates what they call on the Continent the Party of Order. This is nothing more or less than fear. It finds expression in excellent sentences as to the safety of society, the protection of the "results of ages"; but when you analyse it, it simply comes to this,—that those who feel it dread that their shop, their house, their life—not so much their physical life as their whole mode and sources of existence—will be destroyed and cast away. The English Tory party, at the end of the last century, shared largely in this sentiment. The French Revolution terrified mankind all through the period which Arnold called "the misused trial-time of modern Europe". The old cavalier feeling had been gradually melting down into a simple acquiescence in a comfortable existence. The whole life of the higher classes—as it remains to us in books, so agreeable that we can hardly blame what they describe—was a succession of careless enjoyments. They accepted that which was given them—and well they might accept it; for on few generations have the comforts of intellectual cultivation been bestowed in so large measure, and so unchecked by the cares and evils which, in most days, as in ours, that cultivation at once reveals. It is not necessary to say how the danger was speedily revealed. The "French volcano," as Sir Archibald Alison always terms it, soon burst, and brought on, among other effects, Lord Eldon—the man who objected to volcanoes. He was the chief of the party of order at that time. The mass of the people lived in fear that any alteration—anything touching the crust of outward existence—might bring on an eruption. Lord Eldon told them it would bring on an eruption, but if

they would keep him Chancellor there should be no eruption. He held up the Court of Chancery to mankind, and said, "While that moves slowly you are safe—accelerate it and you are lost". No generation more closely observed the signs which were given them. The history of England for thirty years is the history of a craven maintenance of misunderstood institution. The consequence—the nearly fatal consequence—of this has been admitted by those most likely to form a contrary judgment. "A few more drops," said the *Quarterly Review*, "of *Eldonine*, and we should have had the People's Charter." Nothing, indeed, could have been more likely to foster an all-destroying Radicalism than the consecutive omnipotence of the two most contemptible conservatisms—first, of the careless enjoyment which does not regard the evil of others—next, of a shrinking terror when the possible personal consequences of that evil are suddenly comprehended.

It would be very unjust to cast on any portion of the Conservatives of the present day any great share in either of these reproaches. A spirit of earnestness has gone out into society, which forbids the diffusion of reckless and selfish enjoyment. The high-minded pluck of the English gentleman detests the Conservatism of fear. But it yet can hardly be said that we possess a Conservatism of reflection—at least we do not possess it in the degree which we should. How few, even of those who are most anxious to claim the title, have a real mastery of the reasons, a real familiarity with the moral grounds—to say nothing of the political consequences—of the existing state of things! How few of the vaunted arguments which are paraded before minds already convinced would do in the face of an enemy—in the face of those who doubt! How little toleration is there for the refinements of necessary reasoning—for the complexities of political investigation! How strong a tendency to exact a narrow consistency of result, in place of a statesmanlike consideration of problems—a wise and patent weighing of facts. Nor is this a mere party misfortune. It is not because we deem our institutions perfect that we regret the defects of the Conservative party—our grounds are national. To a

great extent, every Liberal is now a Conservative. That moral and intellectual state — that predominance of the politically intelligent—that gradual training of the politically unintelligent—that unity of order and freedom which it is the aim of Liberalism to produce, already exists. Yet our institutions are daily assailed by the "uneasy classes"—by the lovers of correct bureaucracy, all-involving democracy, and quickly striking despotism. In the face of questioning classes, every unthinking Conservative endangers what he defends—he is a vexation to the Liberal, and a misfortune to his country.

## INCONVINCIBLE GOVERNMENTS.

(*From "The Saturday Review," 21st June*, 1856.)

A TOPIC of the day is the cost of freedom. Recent history on the Continent has called up a crowd of courtier speculators, who magnify that cost till it seems too much to pay for anything. Even in the country, some thinkers—rather informed than educated, rather active than wise—have half advocated the same conclusion. Of course this is extreme error. No sound inquirer, attending to the evidence of history or to the evidence of his own eyes, will resist the conclusion that, if you can effectually establish a free government, you had better establish it—that, by so doing, you secure immense blessings and escape overwhelming evils. Yet the gain of freedom, it may be allowed, is not pure gain. There are certainly some minor compensations, which, as a sort of purchase-money, we must pay for freedom.

One of these set-offs is a difficulty in foreign policy. You cannot convince a free people. Of course in real life, it is very hard to convince any one. The number of unsuccessful litigants who are *bonâ fide* converted by the adverse judgments of the courts, is seemingly rather small. The majority resemble the eminent counsel, who exclaimed, "It *is* the law, I know it is the law, but the d——d judges won't decide it so". There being no effectual international tribunal, Governments are peculiarly difficult to persuade. The most intelligent Government has its crotchets. As, in common life, almost every family has a tradition that its ancestors were cheated out of some estate—they even name the estate, value the acres, and count the trees, the only thing not intelligible being the title—so all nations have ancient claims. There is Old Coast, captured A.D. 1—Icy Isle, invaded A.D. 5—Barren Peak,

ascended A.D. 6; and it is difficult to make them imagine that these traditional demands are not in truth valuable possessions.

This is of course common to all Governments, despotic and free. But there is a great difference in practice. A despot is one man. He governs by a *bureau*. If he does not read international controversies himself, he is daily in familiar intercourse with statesmen who have to write on them—who do read them, study them, master them. It is impossible that such a man should not get some notion of there being two sides to every question. Of course, he may be weak and obstinate, vain or haughty. He may have great defects of understanding. Still, in civilised European despotisms, the monarch is brought daily into contact with people who know, and whose ordinary interest it is that he should know, what the case of the adversary is. On the other hand, a free people only hears its own side. It never reads the enemy's despatches. Very few persons are much wiser if they do read despatches. The nation's own Government, by word of mouth, or through its own organs, makes its statement; and hardly any one effectually answers it. No doubt the Opposition are quite ready to say that the negotiations have been misconducted—that the whole affair has been mismanaged—that everybody has done everything wrong—that no one who, in that matter, has done anything, should ever be allowed to do anything again. But the Opposition will go no farther. It is most dangerous in politics to give your opponent the monopoly of the national grievances. If he can make out his case, he will be cheered, applauded, beloved. He has "vindicated the national honour". If you succeed—if you prove that your nation has no claim to the Bay Islands—all you can hope is a cold, ungratified respect. "Well, I suppose, confound him, he *was* right. But I wish he had not been—it was a very deep bay, and there was much to be said on the other side, for all that." If a war breaks out, the case is worse. Those who object are proving that victories are injurious—that defeats are merited—that there is no glory for those who live, no patriotic consolation for those who mourn—that those who

are dead, died endeavouring to do injustice. No Opposition will condemn itself to an argument like this. All political parties conspire to prove to the nation the validity of its claims.

In America this is felt even more than it is here. No respect for the American people—no admiration for their vigour, ability, and energy—will induce educated men in Europe to respect certain American institutions. Many wonder that, in a country where there is so much virtue and cultivation, the tone of public political discussion should be so low and mean. Yet we have at home an instance which should enable us to understand how the two may be consistent. If you throw the whole power into the hands of an inferior class—a class worthy, no doubt, to be represented in its way, but not worthy to have an enormous preponderance—you must not wonder if you reap as you have sown. There is the borough of Finsbury. We remember hearing a learned man in Russell Square—a scholar, who, like many other erudite scholars, rather preferred the instructed, elaborate bureaucracy of Germany to the free, ignorant politics of his own country—arrest an eloquent eulogium on the success with which *all* classes were represented under the British Constitution by remarking, "I am represented by Mr. Wakley and Tom Duncombe". America is one great Finsbury. The instructed sense, the delicate taste, the high cultivation, which are really components in her national life, find no voice in her Government—are overwhelmed amid the multitude of her masses. It is true, of course, that those masses are not what they would be in this or in any European country. We do not speak of the unsettled population of the extreme south—a dangerous element, which, it is to be feared, the world may hereafter have more adequate means of estimating at its value. We do not speak of the States in which the institution of slavery has produced one of its worst and most obvious effects in the disrepute and degradation of free labour. We would speak of America in her best estate—in provinces abounding in all the materials of civilisation—where the working classes are better off than they are anywhere else in the world. It is

exactly here that she is most likely to feel the difficulty of impartiality in foreign affairs. The ruling power in those districts resides in what we may call the *just taught* classes. An immense deal of common information is diffused. All the knowledge which is of use in the everyday work of civilisation is most popular. Reading and writing are the property of everybody. An eager, sharp, "smart" sense is universal among the masses. Woe to those who try to deceive them on matters within their daily sphere, and having reference to their daily calling.

But it is absurd to expect from such persons the balanced sense, the exercised judgment, the many-sided equanimity which are necessary to form a judgment on elaborate controversies, and on difficult foreign relations. The eager intuition, the narrow promptitude, which conduce to their rapid success in their personal pursuits, unfit them for forming a judgment on matters beyond them. They go too quick. They are unalive to the danger of believing as they wish. They fancy that all who argue against them are trying to impose upon them. A low suspicion taints their intellect—a fear of being overreached warps their conduct. They are the ready victims of incendiaries—the sure converts of agitators who trade in grievances, and who can always show that America is injured, that England has been meddling, and that instant attention is required to prevent our attacking some place which we never desired, or annexing some region of which we never heard.

The inference from all this is clear. A country whose institutions subject her to this difficulty is entitled—most of all from those who are near enough in habit and language to comprehend her—to a large tolerance in international controversies. She does not know what she is doing. We may justly endure from our misled and mistaken kindred what it would be disgraceful to bear from an intelligent and designing despot.

## MR. JAMES DEACON HUME.[1]

(*From "The Saturday Review," 7th May*, 1859.)

THIS is a book which should either not have been written at all, or have been written by someone else. The life of Mr. James Deacon Hume might have been made both interesting and instructive by a biographer acquainted with the history of the science of political economy during the present century, and with the details of our commercial legislation during the same period. But it is of little interest in the hands of any other person. The career of Mr. Hume had no marked singularity or striking events. It is the straightforward progress of a straightforward man of business. Mr. Badham's style is entirely unsuited to this sort of biography. It is unmethodical, pompous, and ambitious of needless ornament. To the scientific or the official knowledge which would have made his work of real value, he does not seem to pretend; and he has attempted to give a factitious interest to his subject by accounts of things and persons with which Mr. Hume was very slightly connected.

One of the peculiarities of active life in England of late years has been the number of men of business who have taken an interest in abstract political economy, and who have written valuable works upon it. For many years merely theoretical writers on this science have done very little to advance its progress, and that little has not been very important. But this defect has been amply supplied by the valuable labours of many practical men. There is, indeed, nothing singular in the fact that men of business should take an interest in the theory of business—we should be surprised if

[1] *The Life of James Deacon Hume, Secretary of the Board of Trade*, by Charles Badham, M.A. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1859.

it were otherwise. Nevertheless, the great excellence of works of this kind is a peculiarity of recent time. But very few such works of any great value are known, even by those most curious in such matters, to have appeared before the publication of the *Wealth of Nations*. The reason seems to be, that Adam Smith removed out of the path of succeeding inquirers most of the more obvious fallacies, most of the errors of first impression which perplex the subject, and established its fundamental principles on a firm though rather vague basis. Men of business would not have been themselves equal to this preliminary task. *A priori*, it would seem to need a more general philosophic training than they have at present; and more of leisure than it can be expected that they will ever have. In fact, before the time of Adam Smith, the minds of men of business were generally clouded by the errors of what is called the "mercantile system"—which is but an attempt, more or less successful, to express in a scientific form certain prejudices natural to the money market. From the time that practical men were started in a right direction they have made great progress—far greater than that of any scientific writers—but they want the general views and calm reflectiveness necessary at the earliest stage. At that point an acquaintance with detail is scarcely an assistance—a little remoteness from it is even an advantage.

Mr. J. D. Hume belonged precisely to the class of persons of whom we have been speaking. He was a scientific economist and a practical man of business, and he distinguished himself in both pursuits. His position was very favourable for a combination of the two. His father, whose merits as a man of business appear to have attracted the notice of Mr. Pitt, was Secretary to the Board of Customs, and he himself entered the Custom House at sixteen. In early life he seems to have been most remarkable for bodily energy. He had been at a public school, and benefited at least by that portion of its training. His fondness for hunting must have been remarkable. "Upon one occasion," we are told, "in the depth of winter, being disappointed of the horse which was to take him to the place where the hounds met, he rose between three and

four o'clock in the morning and walked in his top-boots a distance of twenty-three miles into Hertfordshire; and in the evening he offered for a trifling wager to walk back again to London." Of his official career his biographer tells us little, and that little is not very intelligible. We ought to have had, in such a biography as this, a clear account of Mr. Hume's official career; but Mr. Badham evidently thinks this portion of his duties beneath him. He gives us instead quotations from Mr. Burke and other eminent writers, which very seldom have any tendency to elucidate his subject. We have, however, some account of Mr. Hume's introduction to the statesman of that time who was most likely to appreciate his powers of usefulness. "Mr. Hume's situation," which, if we rightly understand his biographer, was at the time that of the Controller of the Customs, "often imposed upon him the duty of writing reports upon subjects connected therewith for the use of the Commissioners. One of these papers had been forwarded to Mr. Huskisson, and related to a subject upon which he happened to be seeking information. Struck probably by the document, he begged to see the individual who had written it; and he, of course, had not long conversed with Mr. Hume before he perceived his worth, how much he had reflected upon, and how thoroughly versed he was in every branch of political economy."

The great work to which Mr. Hume owed his reputation as a man of business was his consolidation of a large portion of the Customs Law. An enormous number of statutes—Mr. Badham says fifteen hundred—then regulated that portion of our administration. Each Act had been passed with reference only to its special object, and the confusion and complexity which might have been expected seem to have ensued. In 1822, Mr. Hume undertook to consolidate a large part of these Acts into a moderate compass. The success of his attempt has been vouched for by many very competent judges. Sir James Stephen, in the volume before us, has pronounced the following characteristic eulogium on it: "Mr. Deacon Hume and I were, during several years, contemporary members of the Board of Trade. But as counsel to that Board I had

nothing to do with his great work, the consolidation of the laws of the Customs. He wrote every word of the code, which ought to have borne his name, locked up day and night, as he often told me, in lodgings which he took for the purpose in Westminster, where even his wife and children were scarcely ever admitted. After a self-imprisonment of many months in that cell, he came out of it with a manuscript, which, when printed, filled a small octavo volume, and which might have been compressed into a pocket duodecimo. It contained all the kernel of that branch of the law which, till then, had been spread over the whole of the statutes at large, or printed collectively in the form of a quarto, containing as much letter-press as any two volumes of the *Encyclopædia Britannica.* Mr. Hume's digest was passed into law by Parliament, as he told me, without the change of a word; and I do not believe that among all the Acts in the Statute Book any could be mentioned which so completely exhausted, and so luminously arranged, so vast a subject within so very narrow a compass of words." And Mr. Huskisson, in the House of Commons, gave a still higher testimony to the value of the work :—

"The task (of consolidating the Customs laws) was of great magnitude, but we did not shrink from it. I am free to admit that we never could have succeeded in our undertaking without the assistance of a gentleman in the service of the Customs, a gentleman of the most unwearied diligence, and who is entitled, for his persevering exertions, and the benefits he has conferred on the commercial world, to the lasting gratitude of the country. In the performance of this duty we had innumerable difficulties to encounter, and battles without end to fight. And now, sir, in one little volume which I hold in my hand, are comprised all the laws at present in existence on the subject of the management and the revenue of the Customs, of navigation, of smuggling, of warehousing, and of our colonial trade, compressed in so clear and yet so comprehensive a manner, that no man can possibly mistake the meaning or the application. . . . Mr. Hume's volume is the perfection of codification."

The important task was completed in 1826, and two years

afterwards Mr. Hume was removed from the Customs to the Board of Trade, of which he was one of the Secretaries, till his retirement from the public service in 1840. During that period he was undoubtedly a most efficient man of business, but he had no opportunity of doing anything which would be likely to be remembered very long. An administrative reputation is, from the nature of it, very temporary.

Mr. Hume's claim to a posthumous fame rests on his writings as a political economist, of which the most remarkable are a series of letters published under the signature of H. B. T. in the *Morning Chronicle* in 1834, and which Mr. Badham has very properly reprinted. Pamphlets on political economy are not often of enduring reputation, but these letters deserve a place in economical history, as among the earliest expositions of two remarkable theories on two important subjects. The first is that of Free Trade. Mr. Deacon Hume was a Freetrader, and almost the earliest Free-trader of what may be called the Anti-Corn-Law League school. The general maxims of commercial freedom have been stereotyped commonplaces from Adam Smith's time downwards. Educated men have for many years more or less acquiesced in them. But it was considered by the majority of Englishmen, not excepting many eminent political economists, that there were economical circumstances which rendered it very unwise to apply them to many parts of English commerce, and especially to the corn-trade. It was to this last point especially that Mr. Hume endeavoured to draw public attention in the letters we have mentioned. The received notion, even among Free-traders, then was, that there were peculiar burdens affecting English agriculture which rendered it impossible for it, under a system of free trade, to compete even in the English market with foreign agriculture, and that a protective duty on the importation of foreign corn would countervail those peculiar disadvantages, and enable it successfully to compete with them. Mr. Hume was among the first to deny both these assumptions. He maintained that there were no important burdens affecting the English farmer which did not press with equal weight on all other capitalists in this country, or which could give

him a claim to protection at the expense of other capitalists. He also denied that the price of corn was higher under the protective system than it would be under one of entire free trade, and that, therefore, it was an error so to speak of the existing duties as a satisfactory compensation to the farmers for their peculiar burdens. He strongly maintained that they did not give them higher prices for their corn than they would obtain without them.

These views are those which, fifteen years ago, were first made generally known to the country by the efforts of the League. Although doubts may be raised to some of the details of these tenets, and substantial objections taken to many of the most celebrated arguments by which they were supported, their general correctness was, at the time of the repeal of the Corn-laws, generally admitted by educated men, and has been to a certain extent confirmed by the event. Mr. Hume was so convinced of their soundness that he was in the habit of saying, "that a better case could be made out for giving a bounty on the importation, than for levying a Custom-house tax on foreign corn"; and he is entitled to be remembered as one of the earliest promulgators of such tenets. Mr. Hume's services to the Free-trade cause were not confined to writing. He possessed very considerable powers of conversational exposition, and made use of them in explaining his favourite views to the many statesmen with whom he was officially brought into contact. And there is much evidence collected in the volume before us that he did so with remarkable success.

The second subject with which Mr. Hume's name ought in some degree to be connected is that of the currency. His contributions to this subject are less important than to that of Free-trade, and from other causes much less interesting. It had been generally believed that the suspension of cash payments by the Bank of England had—at least before the time of the Bullion Committee in 1810—been followed by a great depreciation in the currency of this country. Gold, it is certain, was not then to be found in actual use here as a circulating medium, and it was believed that it had been driven abroad by over-issues of paper. Mr. Hume denied that the

effect was owing to such a cause. He considered that the exportation of gold was mainly owing to the demand for it consequent on our foreign military payments, and on the unfavourable balance of trade created by Napoleon's prohibition of our manufactures. Gold went abroad, he thought, not because our currency was in excess, but because it was the only commodity which Bonaparte would permit the Continent to take, or which would be suitable for war payments. He believed besides that the prices of commodities here were not, generally speaking, higher than they were on the Continent, as apparently they would have been if our currency had been depreciated below the level of theirs. Mr. Hume did not dissent from the doctrine of the Bullion Committee, that the English currency was depreciated below the value which it would have maintained if the suspension of cash payments had not been adopted. He fully agreed with the committee that, to the price at the Mint, the paper currency was depreciated below what must have been its value had it been convertible into gold on demand; but he thought that if Bank-notes had continued to be so convertible, the whole currency of both gold and paper would have risen in value as compared with commodities in general, because of the unusual demand for gold upon the Continent. He believed, therefore, that the measures of the Bank should rather be said to have prevented an appreciation, than to have caused a depreciation of the currency. Views of this kind have since been very extensively promulgated, but in 1834 they were new; and, whatever may be their soundness, Mr. Hume's name ought to be mentioned in connection with them.

On the whole, Mr. Hume must be considered as one of the first of the practical men of business who have contributed to the progress of political economy. His mind was strong, and his views, for the most part, sound. He was profoundly acquainted with the commercial details of his age, and spared no labour in attempting to verify his commercial theories by comparison with actual facts. He was unusually successful as an expositor, for his great powers as a man of business inclined most persons to listen to his theories about business.

## ROGERS'S RECOLLECTIONS.[1]

(*From "The Saturday Review," 6th August*, 1859.)

MR. ROGERS is one of the authors who have taken too much pains with their writings. *The Pleasures of Memory* employed him seven years, *Columbus* fourteen, *Human Life* six, *Italy* fourteen; and even after the publication of these poems he did not cease to correct them. In these days of hasty composition it is impossible not to respect so much patience and so much concentrated labour, and well-known maxims would lead us to anticipate that very great excellence would be their result. We believe, however, that in most cases these maxims are erroneous. We incline to think that such extremely slow production is very rarely favourable to the perfection of works of genius. Writers forget what they mean to say. Who can answer for the exact shade of thought which he intended to express nine years ago? The author knows as little about it as any one else. If the subject is a favourite one, he is very apt to confuse it with other thoughts which have come and gone in the intermediate period. In consequence, when he is correcting, as he calls it, the work of former years, he is apt to substitute a thought materially different from the original one, and less suitable to the connection in which it occurs. The first thought, at any rate, arose out of the thought which preceded it in the course of composition. The interpolated idea was suggested by the circumstances of succeeding years. Again, even if the writer exactly remembers what he meant to say, the effect is often worse. Probably the idea is a fixed idea to him—a notion which he carries through the earth, and which never leaves him. In that case the thought is apt to be

[1] *Recollections*, by Samuel Rogers. London: Longmans, 1859.

so familiar to him that he hardly knows whether any particular words convey it or not. All words on the same subject convey it to his mind, and he is apt to expect that they will convey it to others. Especially when he has altered his own words—as in the course of nine or ten years a man well may, in a short poem, many times—he cannot say whether the thought is adequately expressed or not. The very place in the poem calls up the idea to him; and not any words at all near the mark which satisfy his ear are very apt to satisfy his mind. Accordingly, a student of the most celebrated poems of Mr. Rogers will discover many expressions out of which a patient elaboration has extracted the whole meaning, and many paragraphs of which the first flow has been destroyed by interpolated thoughts and gradually modified ideas.

But however applicable the practice of very elaborate composition might be thought to be to the production of very exquisite poems, hardly anyone, we should have imagined, would have fancied that it was applicable to memoirs and anecdotes. We might as well apply it to letter-writing. Who would like to receive compositions which had been days under cultivation, and which worthily conveyed the elaborate dullness of patient attention? We may like the schoolboy scrawl, but we are certain to dislike the meritorious theme. Accordingly, the great pains and labour which we are told that Mr. Rogers spent on these Memoirs have been very perniciously spent. He had exceedingly valuable materials. He was in the habit of more or less constant intercourse with the best society in London for about fifty years, and he entered in careful journals what he heard there. If he had confined his attention to setting down with distinctness and accuracy the substance of what occurred on the occasions which interested him the most, we could not have failed to have a work full of valuable information, and exhibiting the sensitive taste, cool sense, and refined cultivation which he indisputably possessed. We could have borne with some triviality, for much of it would probably have been characteristic of the times, and even more of it of the writer. Mr. Rogers has unfortunately adopted a very different course. Instead of telling us that he went to

dine with Horne Tooke at such and such a time, that he had such and such a coat on, that he was amusing or not amusing, he has given us selected scraps of his conversation on very many different occasions. We have sets of such sayings as the following :—"Plays and Epic poems mislead us. A leader is often led. He has a thousand opinions to struggle with. Pieces of money are so many tickets for sheep, oxen, etc. When a pension is given, or a salary, a draft is issued on the tiller of the soil." Even if the sayings were in themselves happy, they would lose much of their interest from our not being told to whom they were said, before whom, and in what connexion; and when they have, as is the case with the dicta we have quoted, no intrinsic value at all, it is easy to imagine the folly of the labour which has separated them from all extrinsic sources of interest. We can conceive nothing duller than this book to a person who had never heard of Charles Fox, or Horne Tooke, or Lord Erskine. A reader who is familiar with their characters and their circumstances will occasionally, however, find something which is agreeable to him, because his imagination will enable him to supply the attendant circumstances and living details which Mr. Rogers spent some years in omitting.

Mr. Fox is one of the best known persons of whom Mr. Rogers recollected much, and many persons will therefore feel a slight interest in looking over the disconnected memoranda which he has left us. Sometimes the bouyancy and life of Mr. Fox's character almost prevails over the jejuneness of the reminiscent. We like to read the following of the great statesman :—"Very candid—Retracts instantly—Continually putting wood on the fire—His Trajan, his Venus, his Mosaics from Tivoli—His attachment to particular books—his common-place book—they keep a journal at home and abroad". . . . "When Francis said that Wilberforce, if it was left to him to decide whether Pitt should go out of office for ten months and the slave-trade be abolished for ever, or Pitt remain in, with the slave-trade, would decide for Pitt—'Yes,' said Fox, 'I'm afraid he would be for Barabbas'." . . . "After all, Burke was a damned wrong-headed fellow

through life, always jealous and contradictory." There is something of the simple emphasis of real conversation in these phrases—we feel that they were said. Mr. Rogers observes that his memorials of Mr. Fox show "his playfulness, his love of letters, and his good nature in unbending himself to a young man". There is no doubt that they do so; and if Mr. Rogers had told us the actual details of what happened, they would have shown these estimable qualities still more. Few statesmen have felt so ardent a love of letters as Fox—fewer still have recurred to them with the same fresh gaiety in the midst of a very unsuccessful political career. He thought poetry the "great thing, after all," and agreed with Burke that there was "no truth"—no adequate representation, that is, of great subjects—elsewhere. His insensibility to the kindred art is in contrast curious:—"Mrs. Fox said the only fault she could find with him was his aversion to music. The utmost she could say for him was that he *could* read Homer, while she played and sung to herself." But we cannot say that the undress conversations of this volume will tend to raise the fame of Mr. Fox as a statesman. His situation in later life was singularly unfortunate for a person who had spent his earlier life as he did. He had passed a youth of fashionable excess qualified by fractious debating. From neither of these pursuits had he acquired—for in neither of them had he an opportunity of acquiring—a great store of political reflection. On these subjects, as he declared in the House of Commons, he sat at the feet of Mr. Burke. If he had been thrown, as Mr. Pitt was, among the details of office, there is considerable evidence that he would have mastered them with real vigour—thought upon them with fresh originality. But he had no such opportunity. The twenty years of his life in which his mind would have been most fit for such a task were passed in opposition. His views, in consequence, were almost always defective—often singularly so for a man of his ability in his position. We do not dwell on his dislike of political economy, which is curiously shown in the *Recollections*. "We know nothing on that subject," said Lord Lauderdale, "before Adam Smith wrote." "Pooh," says

Fox, "your Adam Smiths are nothing." We have no right to complain of a statesman of even the end of the eighteenth century for not having given a real attention to the true theory of trade. Those who then did so deserve great praise, but those who were deficient in it scarcely merit great blame. Lord Derby said he was born in the "prescientific period," and Mr. Fox certainly was so. But the volume before us shows distinct traces of a very uncultivated mind on parts of politics which do not need so elaborate a treatment. Mr. Rogers heard him say—"I always say, and always think, that of all the countries in Europe, England will be the last to be free. Russia will be free before England. The Russians know no better, and knowledge might and would operate on them to good; but the English have the knowledge and the slavery too." Of course such reflections are but childish absurdities.

The reminiscences of Horne Tooke, in Mr. Rogers's *Memorandum Book*, are likewise occasionally curious. His literal kind of wit—set off, as tradition recounts, by a courteous manner and by imperturbable coolness—is not ill shown in the following:—"'Power,' said Lord —— to Tooke, 'should follow property'. 'Very well,' he replied, 'then we will take the property from you, and the power shall follow it.'" . . . "'Now, young man, as you are settled in town,' said my uncle, 'I would advise you to take a wife.' 'With all my heart, sir; whose wife shall I take?'" It is a trait of manners that the "Rev. Mr. Horne" must have been a young clergyman at the time of this conversation; he did not, as is well known, take the name of Tooke till a later period. We have a trace, too, of his philological acuteness in Mr. Rogers's pages:—"An illiterate people is most tenacious of their language. In traffic the seller learns that of the buyer before the buyer learns his. A bull in the field, when brought to town and cut up in the market, becomes bœuf, beef; a calf, veal; a sheep, mouton; a pig, pork;—because there the Norman purchased, and the seller soon learnt *his* terms; while the peasantry retained their own." It is not surprising that a sharp logical wit should be an acute interpreter of language.

If, as is generally thought, the general reader be a person of no information, we do not recommend him to read the disconnected scraps to which the punctilious care of Mr. Rogers has reduced his reminiscences; but any one who knows a little of the principal people who have appeared in England during the last sixty or seventy years will find something to interest him, though much less than he would have found if the same materials had been used more freely and more naturally.

## THE SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE.[1]

(*From "The Saturday Review," 27th August*, 1859.)

ALTHOUGH this is not exactly a novel with a dogma, it is a novel with a notion. The notion is that we ought not to dislike to live in a semi-detached house. "Oh, Aunt Sarah," exclaims one of the ladies, in the first page, "you don't mean that you expect me to live in a semi-detached house."—"Why not, my dear, if it suits you in other respects?"—"Why because I should hate my semi-detachment, or whatever the occupants of the other half may call themselves."—"They call themselves Hopkinson," continued Aunt Sarah coolly. —"I knew it," said Blanche triumphantly, "I felt certain their names would be either Tompkinson or Hopkinson. . . . Did you see any of the Hopkinson when you went to look at the house?"—"Yes, they went in at their door just as I went in at yours. The mother, as I suppose, and two daughters, and a little boy."—"Oh dear me! a little boy, who will always be throwing stones at the palings, and making me jump; daughters who will be always playing 'Partant pour la Syrie'; and the mother"—"Well, what will she do to offend your Highness?"—"She will be immensely fat, wear mittens, thick heavy mittens, and contrive to know what I have for dinner every day."

The lady who objects to the "semi-detachment" is a certain Lady Chester, and the book is to teach us that she ought not to object. Mrs. Hopkinson does turn out to be fat, but also turns out to be very sensible, good-humoured and obliging, to have two nice daughters, and to be capable of giving wise

[1] *The Semi-Detached House.* Edited by Lady Teresa Lewis. London: Bentley, 1859.

counsel on the management of the kitchen chimney. The purpose of the book, in so far as it has a purpose, is to teach us that we should take life easily and frankly—associate with the people whom chance throws in our way, if they seem sensible and pleasant—that we should not be too much pleased at speaking to persons of superior rank, nor too anxious to avoid those who may be below us. Our readers will say that, after all, this is not very new, and it certainly is not. But it is a great achievement to teach an old lesson in an enlivening way, and this is a lesson which it is rather difficult to teach with perfect good taste. Mr. Thackeray, for example, has been teaching it with consummate ability for many years; but perhaps he makes too much of it. We fancy he considers it both more difficult and more important than it really is. He a little overrates the intensity of the snobbish propensities—he dwells on them almost sympathisingly. A certain dean of a departed generation cautioned his hearers against "That besetting liquor, old port wine, by which even some of our clergy have been led astray". In a somewhat similar spirit our great satirist warns us that no literary ability, no fame, no mental power is an effectual protection against the desire to speak to Dukes. Wherever he looks through the world, this is the desire he perceives. The insidious temptation creeps into all hearts, and injures wherever it enters. We own that we think this an exceedingly exaggerated kind of teaching. The snobbish desires undoubtedly exist, and are diffused most widely; but it is only in rare cases that they are extremely powerful. They would take most people a little way, but very few people a great way. Mr. Thackeray, too, we think, fancies his lesson too important. Like all missionaries, he intensifies the evil against which he is preaching. Many people who do care too much about the great, and who are too much afraid of talking to those below them, are nevertheless very good people. They have their faults, as others have theirs; but for all that their nature may in the main be sound, and their capacity for substantial excellence may in most of its parts not be much impaired. Snobbishness is an insidious endemic, but it is rarely a mortal malady. We can scarcely perhaps give the

*Semi-Detached House* a higher sort of praise than that it teaches Mr. Thackeray's peculiar doctrine in a healthier and better way than he does. The two varieties of snobbishness —that of running from our inferiors and that of making up to our superiors—both occur pretty often in this book, and both are laughed at. They are allowed to be venial sins, but it is shown that they are ludicrous—that they interfere with the tranquillity of life and with the chances of enjoyment that turn up in it—that sensible persons, whatever their rank may be, laugh at them. Of course there is nothing new in the lesson; but there is a good-natured contempt in the way it is given that is telling. We can fancy it curing, or half-curing, the vice. Mr. Thackeray, we fear, only teaches people to hide the indications of it.

A novel of this sort necessarily has its scene in the middle rank of social life—with some people who are lords and ladies and some who are neither; and it has the sort of merits which such a novel may be expected to have. The dialogue is very good, very witty and buoyant—jolly, though yet lady-like. The events are the ordinary ones of social life. Two families live in the two halves of one house, and are naturally thrown together; and as one is of rank, and the other by no means of rank, the scenes can be made amusing. The lady of no rank fancies, moreover, that the lady of rank is not all which she should be, and this is made amusing too. The authoress has one peculiarity which is invaluable to a painter of common social life—she has a genius for middle-aged women. For obvious reasons young people are made more prominent in novels than they are in reality. Perhaps the discovery of this is one of the sorest disappointments of early life. Young people come out with romantic notions of various sorts, and it is disappointing to find middle-aged people with the influence which they in fact have. As to men it does not seem to matter so much; they have occupations, and briefs, and offices, which seem to explain it. But that the social half of life should be subject to the administrative vivacity of ladies with historical complexions is for a time a trial. A novel like the *Semi-Detached House*, which brings

out this fact, and shows how far the middle aged *régime* may be made tolerable, is instructive.

There are two middle-aged women in this book—one good and the other bad, but both fat and both energetic. We may give a specimen of the conversation of the former:—

"Ah, there they are," said Mrs. Hopkinson, jumping up in a fright. "Oh, John, what shall we do? I knew they would come to us in our turn."

"Who would come, Jane?" said Captain Hopkinson, who was half-asleep.

"Why, the burglars, of course! What will become of us! Where's my purse? I always keep a purse ready to give them, it makes them so good-humoured. Oh, dear, what a noise they make, and they will be quite savage if they are kept waiting," she said, as another violent ringing was heard. "John, John, you must not go down to them; they will knock you down. Let me go."

"I don't see," said John, laughing, "why I am to let you go and be knocked down instead of me. But, my dear, there is no danger; burglars do not come and ring the bell and ask to be let in like a morning visitor. It must be the policeman."

"Ah, poor man! I daresay with his head knocked to pieces with a life-preserver, and all over kicks and bites. But, perhaps, he is only come to tell us the house is on fire," said Mrs. Hopkinson, with a sudden accession of cheerfulness. "I should not mind that, anything is better than robbers. Oh, John, now don't put your head out so far, those ticket-of-leave men fire in all directions. And do keep calling out Thomas and John, and I will answer in a gruff voice," said poor Mrs. Hopkinson, who was so terrified her whisper could scarcely be heard.

"My dear," said John, withdrawing his head, "there is nothing to be alarmed at. It is Lord Chester; Lady Chester is taken ill, and he wants you to go to her."

"And so that is all," said Mrs. Hopkinson, instantly beginning to dress. "Ah, poor soul, of course I will. Well, now, this is neighbourly of them, and I take it very kindly

their sending for me. Why, they are two babies themselves, and they can't know what to do with a third."

The snobbish fat lady is a certain Baroness Sampson, the wife of a certain Jewish *millionaire* in the City, who is discovered at the end of the book not to be a *millionaire*, and decamps. This lady is not, indeed, asked to the Queen's balls, but intends to bring her Majesty "to her senses next year," and lives upon that pretension in the meantime. That she pretends to know persons whom she has never seen, and is very anxious to know people who will upon no account know her, it is not necessary for us to relate.

One defect of the lesson not to object to a "semi-detached house" is that it will not make a plot of itself. The authoress of the book, wishing to have a plot, like other novelists, has been obliged to annex one from other sources. She has not, however, thought it worth while to look out for a complicated one. The hero is a certain man named Willis, who has lost his wife, and trades on his disconsolateness ever after. He really makes a great deal of it in general society. Much attention is paid him by way of relief, and the minor comforts of life are constantly offered to him by way of compensation. These, however, he resists, and perseveres in his unconquerable depression, naturally feeling that while it obtained him so many pleasant things it would be foolish to relinquish it.

There is one pursuit in life in which a conspicuous grief for a deceased wife is likely to be rather an encumbrance than a help—and that is, the wooing of a second. In Mr. Willis's case the difficulty is increased by his having selected a matter-of-fact young lady who works out her ideas with unusual distinctness. "Either," she says to Mr. Willis, "you do not still care for your late wife, for whom you are in the deepest mourning, or you do not care for me. If you like me, leave off your mourning; if you must keep your mourning, leave me alone. Either your love is false or your grief is false; please make your selection." Mr. Willis is logician enough to feel the force of this reasoning, and ceases to be disconsolate.

We do not know whether such a plot was intended to be

anything ; but it is nothing. No art could spin much out of so slight a material. Besides, the moment Mr. Willis ceases to be mournful, he ceases to be anything. He has, in other respects, no more character than the mute in a funeral. He displays all through the book one trait, and one only. The moment he loses that, he vanishes in our fancy entirely. As this is the case, we need not say that the merit of the book does not lie in the story, but in its sparkling dialogue, its good subsidiary characters, and its cheerful and habitual good sense.

## THE ADVENTURES OF PHILIP ON HIS WAY THROUGH THE WORLD.

(*From "The Spectator," 9th August*, 1862.)

Mr. Thackeray has arrived at a peculiar distinction in the world of art. When we look at a new picture of any recognised school—suppose the Dutch School of Art—we do not expect to receive any entirely novel idea. We look at the pictures of Wouverman's, and we ask where is the White Horse: we look at Teniers or Ostade, and we expect to see our old friends, the old clay jug, the old merry boors, the old natural bourgeois life. Of each new picture, we judge, or attempt to judge, whether that new specimen of the familiar class is of the first excellence in that class. If a person says, "Teniers is occupied with low subjects," we answer, "Of course he is! how young *you* are!" In the same way, when we read a new book of Mr. Thackeray's, we know precisely that which we have to anticipate. We are well aware that human life will be delineated in a certain characteristic way, and according to certain very peculiar and characteristic conventions. *That* is Thackeray, we say: we know what he is, and we do not expect him to change; we compare himself with himself; we only ask whether he is good to-day in comparison to what he was yesterday.

Mr. Thackeray is a writer to whom this peculiar sort of fame is especially natural and appropriate. His most obvious merit is an artistic expression. His words have a felicity in conveying what he means, which no other words would have. His delineation is inexplicably, but somehow certainly, better than any other sort of delineation of the same kind. You say those sentiments are low; they are, at any rate, not the highest; but if you try to express those sentiments yourself, you will find that you come to nothing, or that you become unen-

durable. The author of *Vanity Fair* can describe the world as if it were a vanity fair, and all men read him, and those who study the art of expression study him for that art; but we should laugh at a baby imitator. We should say, "My dear young sir, it takes years of worldly study and years of deep feeling, at once worldly and unworldly, to know how to use these worldly words so spiritually and so nicely. You can hardly talk as yet. Do not try to imitate the delicate *finesse* of the practised *raconteur*, or the melancholy mirth of the Belgravian novelist. It is not for young enthusiasts, it is not for patient-thinking men so to dress thought or a near approach to thought, that the unthinking world will read and re-read it."

In this book, *Philip*, Mr. Thackeray is evidently trying to baffle his critics. They have said very often that he could never make a plot. He is now trying to show that he can. He has accumulated all the best traditional material. An eager, impetuous hero, who is skilful in getting into scrapes, and unskilful in extricating himself from them; a nice little heroine, gentle on all other matters, but biting like a tigress when her lover is attacked; a bad father, who commits forgery and seduction; a bad mother, who wishes to induce her daughter to abandon her lover, partly from a just belief that the match is a bad one, but partly also from a maternal impulse to bully and tyrannise; a professional nurse who is still not very old, and who was seduced in her youth, and who passes her life in doing good actions to a son of her seducer by a different woman; an old lord of diabolical principles and conversation to match; a marriage perhaps valid, perhaps invalid; a long period, during which the hero is interestingly poor; a sudden discovery of a lost will by which he is reinstated in comfort and opulence; these are good materials. They are the best part of the recognised stock in hand of narrative artists. If a writer could accomplish nothing with this capital apparatus, it is not likely that he will accomplish much with any other. He has as good a chance with this machinery as he is ever likely to have with any.

Nevertheless as far as "plot" is concerned, *Philip* is a

failure. No one of all its most numerous readers has probably read it with eager interest as a story. You no more care what becomes of any of Mr. Thackeray's celebrated characters than you want a biography of a Dutch boor or a Dutch utensil in Teniers' pictures. There the characters are in "Thackeray"; you contemplate them with pleasure and indulgence and satisfaction; and you watch them as you watch your companions at a party only that you feel that you understand them better. Thackeray is like the edited and illustrated edition of a great dinner; but as for caring what becomes of those people, of the adjacent crinolines and opposite white ties, no, you cannot do that. You see what they are but you cannot be interested in their future. Mr. Thackeray, as we know well, cares for the people in the book, and Providence (we suppose) will care for the people at the dinner, but we cannot in either case concern ourselves with the subject.

Mr. Thackeray evidently feels this himself. He has no great impulse to tell us what happened to his characters. He must have a story, he knows, to tell us, and, therefore, he concocts or adapts a story, and involves his characters in it as best he may, but he can do no more. His feeling is the opposite of Mr. Canning's knife-grinder; the latter had nothing to relate, and was sorry for it: Mr. Thackeray must relate something, and is sorry for that also. His characteristic exclamation is, "Story! God bless you, I have one to tell you, Sir; but do not ask me to tell it, Sir; it *is* such a bore, Sir".

Mr. Thackeray likes to have a characteristic particular in every book, and he has one here. It is the relation of children to their parents. We do not mean the sentimental relation in which each is fond of the other, or the pecuniary relation in which one inherits from the other, but a more complex relation in which one of them is contrasted with the other. With a very peculiar watchfulness Nature has provided us with an instinctive aversion to what our parents do. "*I* won't do *that* at any rate," says the eager vanity, the improving conceit of youth. From the faults and vanities of our fathers we rush, angry and ardent, to follies of our own. Even with the very best children of the best parents it is so. The religious

daughter of a Puritan mother has very early a latent weakness for the Virgin Mary. In the early self-will that accompanies second teeth, she peruses the *Christian Year* as a secret study, not being quite sure whether she enjoys most the overt excellence of the pure book or the latent flavour of her slight disobedience. All the Wilberforces are anti-Evangelical, and the Bishop of Oxford has very little anti-slavery fanaticism. The good children of good parents are sure to have, at any rate, a very different sort of goodness from that of their parents. And the good children of bad parents feel the reaction too, and make a much better use of it. They are excellent with the very virtues which their progenitors missed, and loathe all the offences in which those progenitors especially indulged. Philip is bold, outspoken, and unworldly because his father is mean, cringing, and parasitical. Nature won't have a monotonous world at any rate. With an impatience of what it has always seen, an antipathy to what it has always heard, and a frantic wish to be original, an eager youth flounders into life. "May I be delivered from father and mother!" so begins his litany. And his prayer is granted. The world strikes him hard enough and often enough, but it has an insidious pleasure in exiling him far from his paternal home and driving him far from his ancestral creed.

We do not mean that Mr .Thackeray resembles Sir Archibald Alison. His books are not sermons with narratives between them. Mr. Thackeray's favourite art is a sort of annotated picture. He describes to you Philip and Charlotte, the mother-in-law and the aunt-in-law, and then he likes to pause to analyse, to assure you that Philip was very impetuous and eager, which was a disadvantage to him generally in life; but an advantage to him in this case, for else he would never have been bold enough to seize that pretty little girl; and as to Charlotte, he tells you that she is a weak little thing, which is also a difficulty for her in the general course of life, but an advantage now, for if she had had any mind, she might have obtruded it during the courtship, and so disconcerted and startled her admirer. Any particular intellect in either party would rather, the commentator says, disenchant than enchant

the other. And so he goes on volume after volume painting for us pretty scenes, and covering them with worldly remarks.

It is for these sort of half-cynical, half-true delineations that Mr. Thackeray's pen was meant. He looks at the spectacle of society, the *play* which is going on in the miscellaneous theatre of the world. He rather yawns at the great passions, and but torpidly wonders at its great efforts and troublesome events. The "grand style" may be grand, but it is a little tiresome; it is rather a young notion to be taken in by all that. Some divines earnestly counsel us not to be busy about "public matters which concern us not"; the true philosophy of this world is of the same mind. "If you bore yourself, my son," it says, "you will become a bore; leave the great tasks of life to the few who are entrusted with them and paid for them; it is *ridiculous* to be an amateur statesman: if you have an opinion on such subjects secrete it; sooner or later it will bring you into trouble, and you will be laughed at for it."

Such is Mr. Thackeray's evident belief. He won't encumber himself with big ideas. If he should encounter a serious discussion, as will happen to the lightest writers, he will lounge through it if he can. He is great in minute anatomy. The subsoil of life—not the very surface, but just the next layer which one little painful scratch will bring up—this is his region, and it is an immense one. The great passions are few and simple; lists of the best situations might well be drawn up, and categories of the highest characters even more easily. The peaks of great mountains are much like one another, and an artist who was celebrated only for painting them would have but few pictures to sell. Various art is, in its essence, sublunary. Do not be exaggerated, do not aim too low; do not take the worst of the world; extreme badness is as monotonous and of as few species as the best excellence. Live on the ordinary common follies of the ordinary common world; analyse most men as they stand before you, interested in most things and practising most things. By natural tact and studious pains Mr. Thackeray does so inimitably well, and therefore his art is copious as well as excellent.

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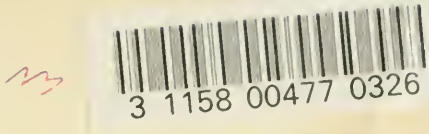

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